



# **Town of Dell Prairie Comprehensive Plan 2016**



## **Town of Dell Prairie**

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Adopted November 2016

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Prepared by:  
North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

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# DEMOGRAPHICS

The Town of Dell Prairie is located in the lower southwestern part of Adams County, Wisconsin. With the Wisconsin River leaving 8 partial sections on the west side of Township 14 North - Range 6 East, the town “borrows” Sections 6, 7, 18, 19, 30 and 31 from Township 14 North - Range 7 East, for an additional 28 full sections. The Towns of Springville and Jackson to the north, the Town of New Haven to the east, the County of Juneau to the west, and the County of Columbia to the south bound the town. It is one of seventeen towns in Adams County. See **Map 1**, Location.

Over the years the town has been dominated by forestry and scattered agricultural uses. However, recently, more and more non-farming uses, mainly scattered residential development, have been locating in the town. See **Map 2**, Planning Area

## The Planning Process

The Comprehensive Planning Process was overseen by the Plan Commission. The Plan Commission met several times with staff from North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to review the 2006 plan, analyze updated data, draft new goals, and develop a new Future Land Use map. This process took approximately nine months, culminating in the adoption of this Plan in November 2016.

## Public Participation

An important part of any planning process is public involvement. Public involvement provides the citizens of the town an opportunity to express their views, ideas, and opinions on issues that they would like addressed on the future development of their town. Local officials use this input to guide policies and decisions with greater awareness of the public’s desires and consensus. A Public Participation Plan

was adopted early in the planning process to ensure the public had opportunities to engage. This Plan ensures that all meetings are posted and open to the public, all materials related to the plan are available at the Town Hall and online for public review, and that a public hearing will be held to solicit public comment prior to adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

## Town Demographics

### Population

The Town’s population has increased over the last ten years according to the Census. The town experienced a 33 percent increase between 1990 & 2000. Meanwhile the county grew at the rate of 27 percent over the same time period. This growth slowed drastically in the following decade, between 2000 and 2010. Between 2000 and 2010 Dell Prairie grew by 12 percent, outpacing the county and all of the surrounding towns, with the exception of Springville. In 2015 the town was 7.8 percent of the total population of the county, up from 7.6 percent in 2010 and 6.8 percent in 1990.

Annually, the Wisconsin Department of Administration publishes population estimates for all minor civil divisions. For the 2015 estimates, all of the towns used for comparison showed growth, while the county showed a decline.

If the ten-year growth trend were maintained, the town would expect about a 12 percent increase in population over the next ten years. Thus, 191 additional residents would reside in the town. However, if the town grew at the same pace as the county it would expect about 80 additional residents. The Wisconsin DOA projects that the population will grow by 191 residents to 1,780 by 2020 and by 2035 will be 2,070, which closely matches the historical growth rate.

**Table 1 - Population**

|                     | 1990   | 2000   | 2010   | 2015   | 2000 - 2010<br>% Change | 2000 - 2010<br>Net Change |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Dell Prairie</b> | 1,063  | 1,415  | 1,590  | 1,630  | 12%                     | 175                       |
| <b>Springville</b>  | 785    | 1,167  | 1,318  | 1,329  | 13%                     | 151                       |
| <b>Jackson</b>      | 641    | 926    | 1,003  | 1,011  | 8%                      | 77                        |
| <b>New Haven</b>    | 511    | 657    | 655    | 660    | 0%                      | -2                        |
| <b>Adams County</b> | 15,682 | 19,920 | 20,875 | 20,857 | 5%                      | 955                       |

Source: U.S. Census

## Age

The number of people aged 65 and older that lived in the community increased 96 percent from 145 in 1990, to 198 in 2000, to 284 in 2010. Meanwhile the number of people five and under increased from 62 to 83, or 33.9 percent between 1990 and 2000, but by 2010 had declined for a total increase of 9.7 percent over the 20 year period. Both percentages indicate an aging population in Dell Prairie, despite the under 18 years old cohort being the largest age cohort in Dell Prairie.

According to the U.S. Census, Dell Prairie's median age increased from 38 in 1990 to 47 in 2010. This compares to Adams County where the median age over the same period increased from 40 to 49. Over the decade, Dell Prairie's median age has increased by six years and is below the county's median age by two years, but it is ten years above the state's median age. Display 1 shows the majority of the population in 2000 to be in the under 18 range, with the next three largest groups being 45 and older. The sharp drop-off in the 18-34 year old cohort suggests young people are leaving the town to pursue education or employment opportunities after graduating high school. This older and aging population creates special implications for planning when it comes to housing and supportive services.

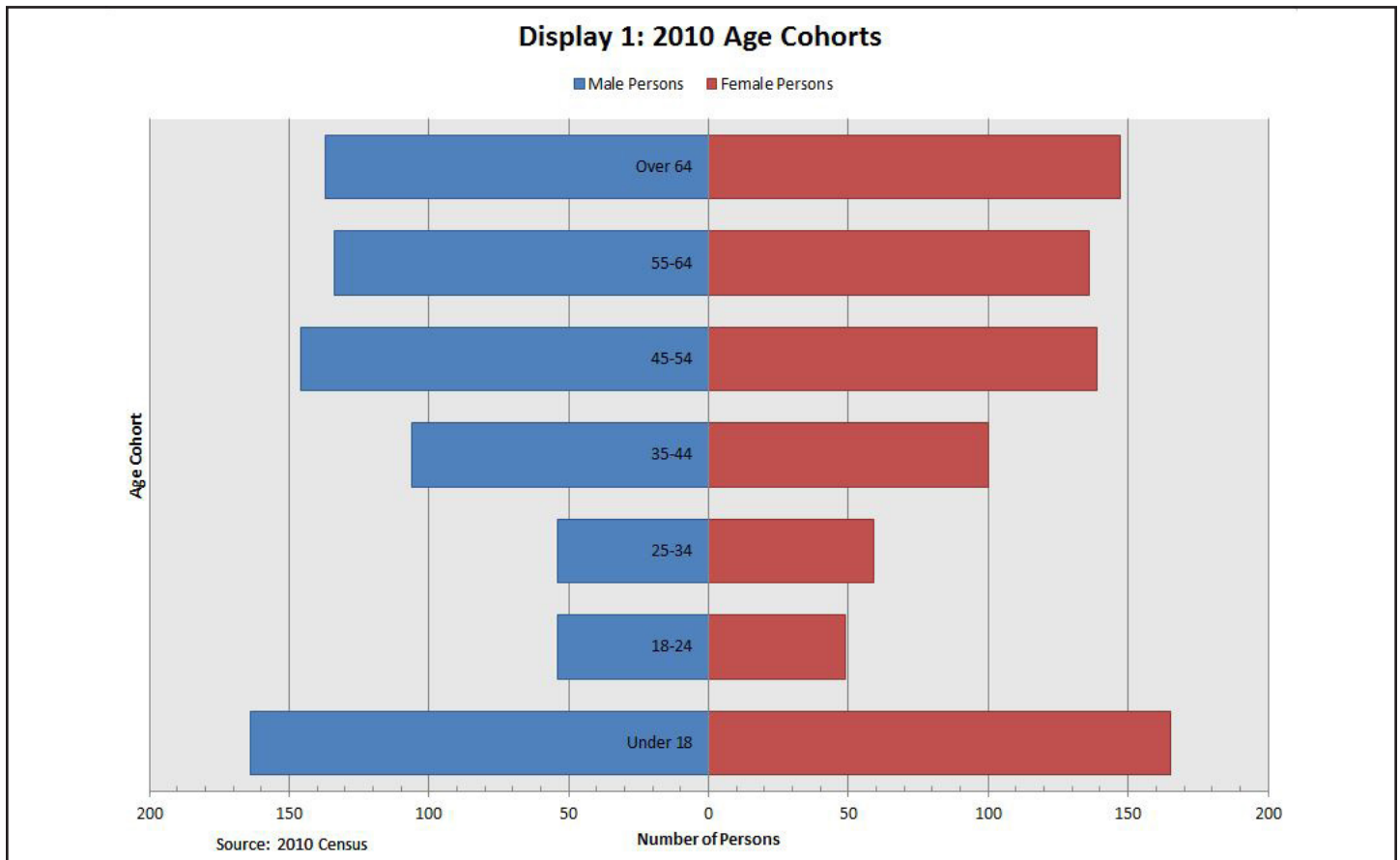
## Race and Ethnicity

In 2000, 1,371 of 1,415 residents listed themselves as White, 21 as American Indian, 7 as Asian, 9 as African American, and 7 as some other race. In 2010 1,507 of the 1,590 people were White, 9 were Black or African American, 31 were American Indian or Native Alaskan, one was Asian, and seven were some other race. Thirty-five people identified as two or more races, 11 as White and Black or African American, and 21 as White and American Indian or Native Alaskan. Display 2 shows the racial makeup among the residents in Dell Prairie. Thirty-seven residents identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.

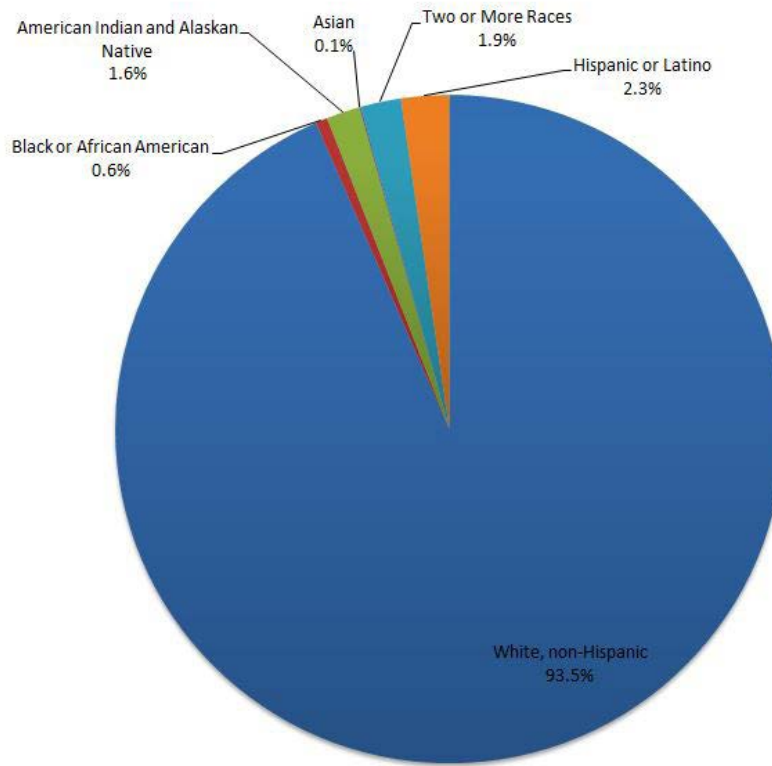
## Educational Level

The 2000 Census showed that 793 had completed high school and of those 793, 251 had some college, 56 had an associate degree, 119 had a bachelor degree and 24 had a graduate or professional degree. The 2006-2010 American Community Survey shows that 935 had completed high school, 86 had an associate's degree, 141 had a bachelor's degree, and 52 had a graduate or professional degree.

Between 2000 and 2010, the percent of the population that graduated high school has increased from 80.2 percent to 85 percent, and the portion of the population

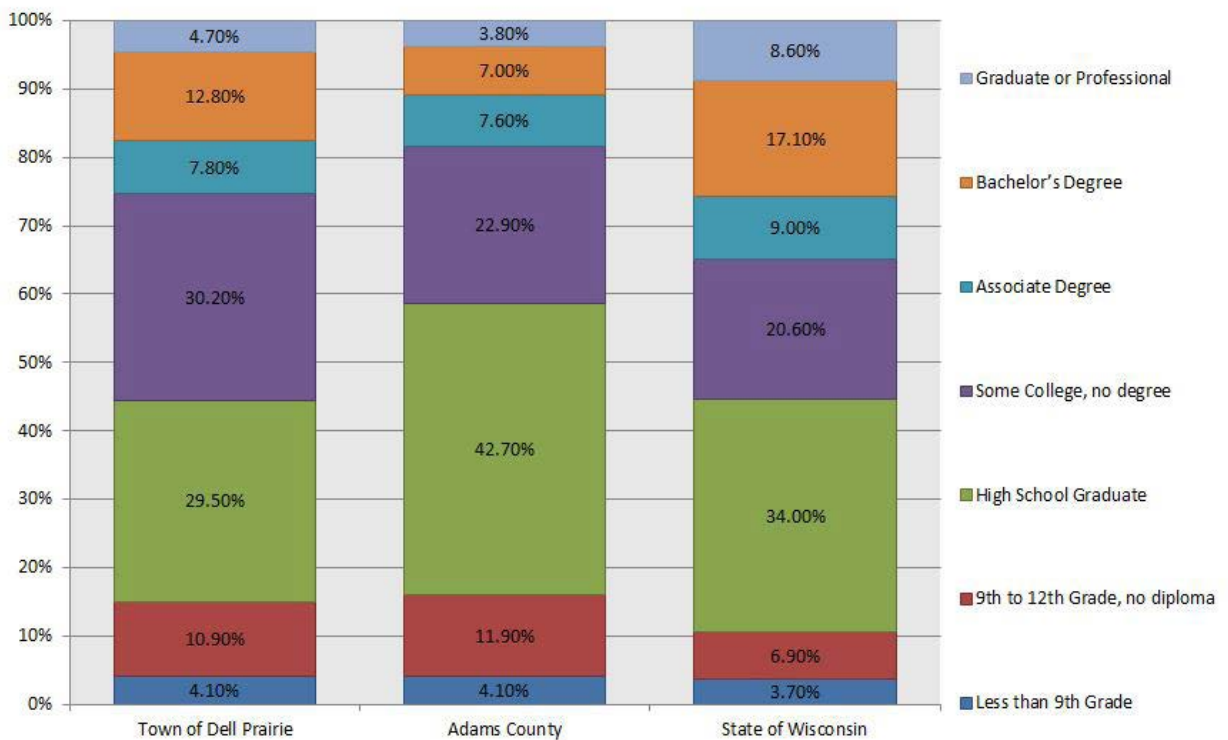


### Display 2: 2010 Racial Makeup



Source: U.S. Census

### Display 3: Educational Attainment, Age 25 and Older, 2010



Source: 2010 U.S. Census

with a bachelor's degree or higher has increased from 8.2 percent to 17.5 percent. Both of these figures are still well behind state levels, but slightly higher than the county. The Town of Dell Prairie has a higher percentage of residents compared to the county and state with some college but no degree. Educational attainment can have important implications for the capacity of a labor force in economic development. Only those 25 years of age and older are reflected in these statistics. Display 3 provides a summary of educational attainment in Dell Prairie, Adams County, and the State.

### Households

The number of households in the town has grown by 37.6 percent, from 402 in 1990 to 553 in 2000 to 649 in 2010. Of the 649 total households, 71.3 percent were family households, with 25.4 percent with their own children under 18 years old. About 60 percent were married couple households. Thirty-one percent of all households included someone 65 years old or older, while 27 percent included someone 18 or younger. The average household size in 2010 was 2.45 people, down from 2.51 people in 2000.

### Employment

Between 1990 and 2000 the town's employed residents increased 32.7 percent and increased 19.25

percent between 2000 and 2010. Over the decade, the percentage of unemployed increased from 4.8 percent to 7.0 percent. This rate is lower than the county but higher than the other nearby towns and the state. More detailed employment information can be found in the Economic Development chapter.

### Household Income

The median household income (MHI) in the town was \$55,057, higher than the surrounding towns, Adams County and the state. With the exception of New Haven, Dell Prairie had the slowest rate of household income decline after adjusting for inflation, with New Haven being the only nearby town that had real household income growth.

Adjusted per capita income rose over the 10 year period in Dell Prairie, Jackson, and New Haven. The per capita income in the town is above the county but still slightly below the state. It is also higher than the surrounding towns, with the exception of Jackson.

Of the 655 households in the town, 138 (21%) reported incomes less than \$24,999 and 80 (12%) had an income above \$100,000. The 2006-2010 ACS indicates that approximately 6.5 percent of people in the town live in poverty, down slightly from 7.8 percent in 1999.

**Table 2 - Households**

|                     | 2000      | 2010      | 2000 - 2010<br>% Change | 2000 - 2010<br>Net Change |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Dell Prairie</b> | 553       | 649       | 17.4%                   | 96                        |
| <b>Springville</b>  | 487       | 538       | 10.5%                   | 51                        |
| <b>Jackson</b>      | 397       | 465       | 17.1%                   | 68                        |
| <b>New Haven</b>    | 260       | 264       | 1.5%                    | 4                         |
| <b>Adams County</b> | 7,900     | 8,666     | 9.7%                    | 766                       |
| <b>Wisconsin</b>    | 2,084,544 | 2,279,768 | 9.4%                    | 195,224                   |

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 3 - Employed Residents**

|                     | 2000      | 2010      | % Change | Unemployment<br>Rate |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------------|
| <b>Dell Prairie</b> | 670       | 799       | 19.25%   | 7.0%                 |
| <b>Springville</b>  | 524       | 631       | 20.42%   | 3.7%                 |
| <b>Jackson</b>      | 408       | 491       | 20.34%   | 6.8%                 |
| <b>New Haven</b>    | 317       | 301       | -5.05%   | 5.6%                 |
| <b>Adams County</b> | 7,847     | 8,354     | 6.46%    | 8.4%                 |
| <b>Wisconsin</b>    | 2,734,925 | 2,869,310 | 4.91%    | 6.7%                 |

Source: U.S. Census



**Table 4 - Median Household Income**

|                     | <b>2000</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>Adj. Net Change*</b> | <b>% Change*</b> |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Dell Prairie</b> | \$43,750    | \$55,057    | -\$343                  | -0.62%           |
| <b>Springville</b>  | \$34,531    | \$39,107    | -\$4,619                | -10.56%          |
| <b>Jackson</b>      | \$39,338    | \$41,008    | -\$8,806                | -17.68%          |
| <b>New Haven</b>    | \$35,536    | \$50,714    | \$5,715                 | 12.70%           |
| <b>Adams County</b> | \$33,408    | \$39,885    | -\$2,419                | -5.72%           |
| <b>Wisconsin</b>    | \$43,791    | \$51,598    | -\$3,854                | -6.95%           |

\*Adjusted for inflation. Source: U.S. Census

**Table 5 - Per Capita Income**

|                     | <b>2000</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>Adj. Net Change*</b> | <b>% Change*</b> |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Dell Prairie</b> | \$19,209    | \$25,530    | \$1,206                 | 4.96%            |
| <b>Springville</b>  | \$16,145    | \$19,882    | -\$562                  | -2.75%           |
| <b>Jackson</b>      | \$19,080    | \$27,639    | \$3,478                 | 14.40%           |
| <b>New Haven</b>    | \$15,624    | \$22,093    | \$2,308                 | 11.67%           |
| <b>Adams County</b> | \$17,777    | \$21,917    | -\$594                  | -2.64%           |
| <b>Wisconsin</b>    | \$21,271    | \$26,624    | -\$311                  | -1.16%           |

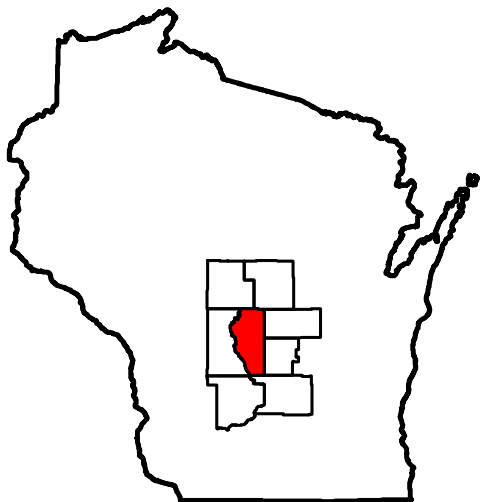
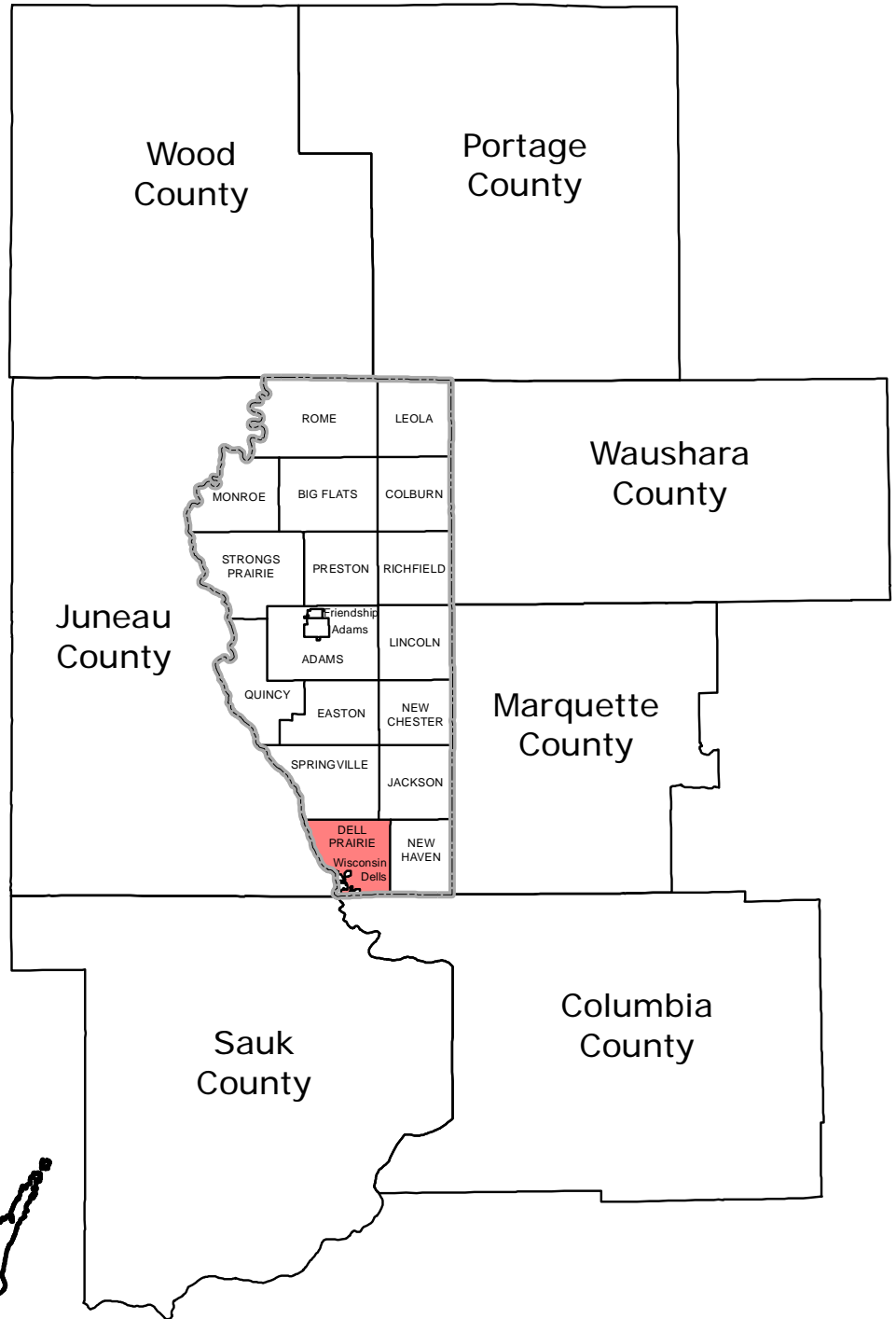
\*Adjusted for inflation. Source: U.S. Census

**Table 6 - Poverty Rate (%)**

|                             | <b>1999 Poverty Rate (%)</b> | <b>2010 Poverty Rate (%)</b> |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Town of Dell Prairie</b> | 7.8%                         | 6.5%                         |
| <b>Adams County</b>         | 10.4%                        | 12.6%                        |
| <b>State of Wisconsin</b>   | 8.7%                         | 11.6%                        |

Source: U.S. Census

Locational  
Town of Dell Prairie  
Adams County, Wisconsin



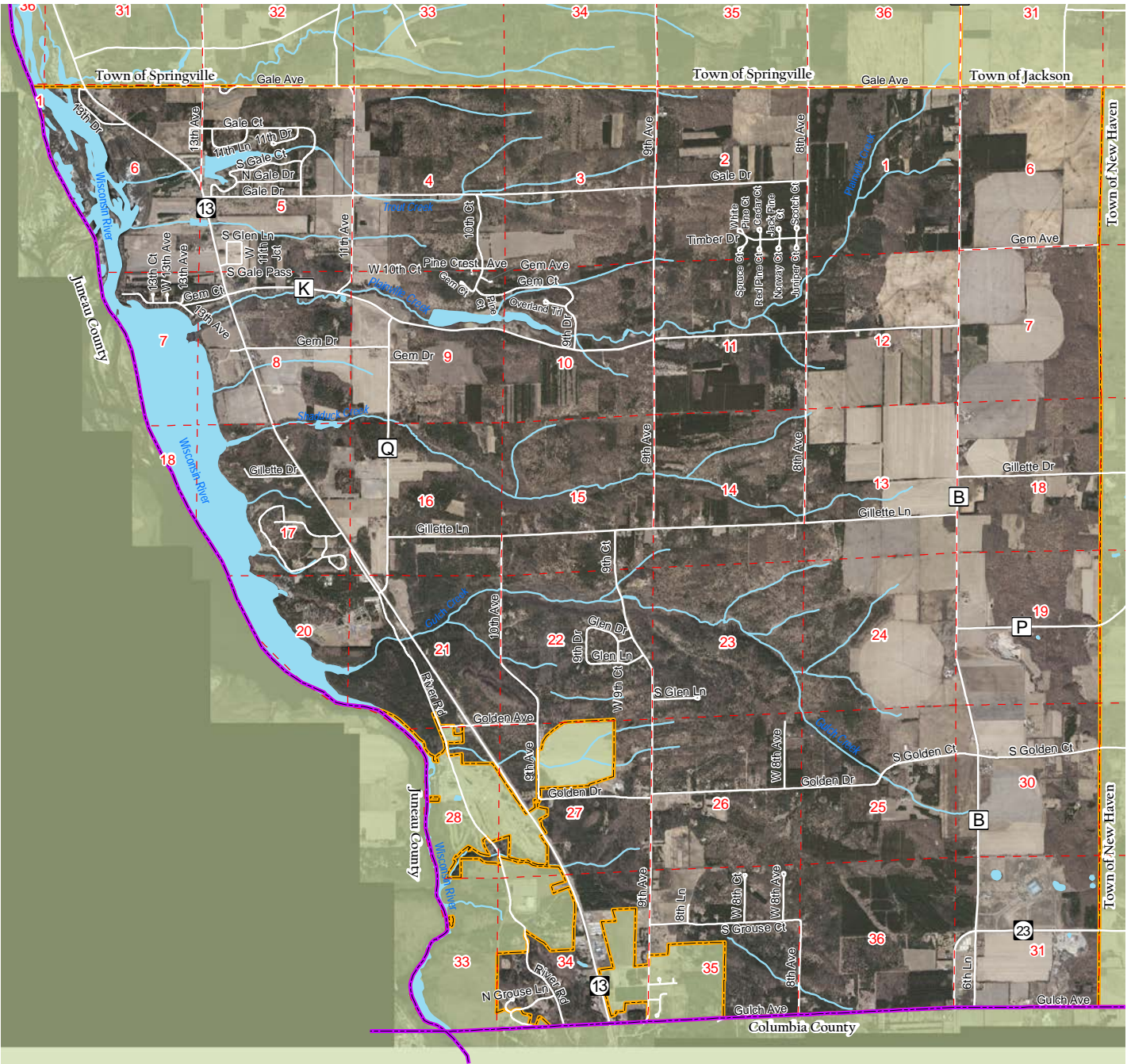
Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey of the actual boundary of any property depicted. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.








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**Legend**

-  County Boundary
-  Section Lines
-  Minor Civil Divisions
-  Roads
-  Water



Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, 2015 Airphoto

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# NATURAL, AGRICULTURAL, & CULTURAL RESOURCES

## Natural Resources

The Town of Dell Prairie is in the mid-continental climatic zone. This zone is characterized by long, snowy winters and short, warm summers. Spring and fall are often short with rapid changes from summer to winter and winter to summer. Annual precipitation, throughout the area, averages about 32 inches. About one-half to two-thirds of the annual precipitation falls between May and September. Snowfalls range between 45 and 80 inches annually, with a continuous snow cover from December to early April.

The protection of natural features in the physical landscape, including water resources, soils, and woodlands, is necessary for the preservation of the environment for future generations. Certain environmental features and assets have more than merely aesthetic and leisure-time activity values. They are essential to long-term human survival and the preservation of life, health, and general welfare. As such, the protection and/or management of these environmental features and assets clearly are in the public's best interest. Natural and cultural resources are also important to the Town's character and identity.

The Town covers about 20,900 acres of land. The topography varies with some flatter areas to some hilly areas. Elevation ranges from around 860 feet above sea level along the Wisconsin River to 1,030 feet above sea level in some of the hilly areas along the eastern edge of the Town. The town has some steep slopes which hinder development, mostly along the creeks and along the eastern edge of the Town. See the Natural Resources Map, [Map 3](#).

### Rivers and Creeks

Together the rivers, creeks, and ponds in the Town account for a total of about 751 acres, or 3.6 percent of the Town's area. The major water body is the Wisconsin River which forms the western boundary of the Town. Four creeks reach inland into the Town from the River. From north to south, the four creeks are Trout Creek, Plainville Creek, Shadduck Creek, and Gulch Creek. The Natural Resources Map shows the locations and names of the major surface waters in the Town.

These surface water resources replenish the groundwater as part of the hydrologic cycle. Under natural conditions, the aquifers generally receive clean water from rainfall percolating through the overlying



Fawn Lake

soils. However, contamination of groundwater reserves can result from such sources as percolation of water through improperly placed or maintained landfill sites, private waste disposal located near the water table, leaks from sewer pipes, and seepage from some types of mining operations into the aquifer. Runoff from livestock yards and urban areas and improper application of agricultural pesticide or fertilizers can also add organic and chemical contaminants in locations where the water table is near the surface. Protection of these groundwater reserves is necessary to ensure adequate water to domestic, agricultural and commercial uses. If groundwater is not protected, contamination could result; thus, endangering the quality and supply of the water in the town.

### Wetlands

Wetlands are defined as areas between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is at, near, or above the land surface for a significant part of most years. Wetlands include marshes, wooded swamps, and wet meadows. Soils in these areas are usually saturated during the growing season within a few inches of the surface. The presence of wetlands in an area can limit the type of development that can occur in that location.

Wetlands are found in the northwestern corner of the Town along the Wisconsin River, as well as along Plainville Creek, Shadduck Creek, and Gulch Creek. See the Natural Resources Map.

Wetlands perform many indispensable roles in the proper function of the hydrologic cycle, and local

ecological systems. In a natural condition, they control floodwater by moderating peak flows, and some may act as groundwater recharge sites. All wetlands have valuable water purification capabilities and make significant contributions to surface and groundwater quality. They act as settling areas for inflowing streams as well as functioning in the reduction of water nutrients through uptake of these compounds into plant tissues. They also have a buffering effect on water acidity or alkalinity and are helpful in the elimination of harmful bacteria, which may be found in surface or groundwater. They also serve as breeding and nesting grounds for waterfowl and many other animals that depend on aquatic habitats; they are an important recreational, education, and aesthetic resource. In many instances, wetlands serve as the combined roles of flood moderation, water purification and aquatic habitat, wetlands are important to the maintenance of downstream habitat as well.



Woodlands along the River

### **Floodplains**

A floodplain is an area of land that is prone to flooding, usually located adjacent to a stream or river. Floodplains in the Town are found along the Wisconsin River, and along the creeks which reach inland into the Town. See the Natural Resources Map.

Floodplains are a natural feature not conducive to development. Inappropriate location of roadways in floodplains can result in serious flood damage. Periodic roadbed saturation and embankment washing eventually lead to an increase in road maintenance costs. In addition to roads, floodwaters can create a number of problems by damaging foundations of homes, electrical equipment, heating units, etc. Basements constructed on permeable sands and silts of floodplains are especially susceptible to damage resulting from seepage through walls. Thus, it is advisable to restrict development in such areas.

### **Woodlands**

Woodlands are the predominant land cover within the Town, covering nearly 12,940 acres, or approximately 62 percent of the Town. Forest cover provides many vital functions, which are diverse in nature; forested lands provide for recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, economic commodity (timber products), and wildlife habitat as well as protection of sensitive environmental areas. Tree cover is essential, especially for erosion control and to reduce effluent and nutrient flows into surface water bodies and courses. Woodlands are shown on Map X, Existing Land Use.

Some woodlands in the town are being maintained

through the Managed Forest Law (MFL) and the Forest Crop Law (FCL). This tax assessment program is available to landowners willing to manage their forest plot according to sound forestry practices as specified in a management plan.

### **Threatened or Endangered Species**

Wisconsin's National Heritage Inventory program (NHI) is responsible for maintaining data on the locations and status of rare species, natural communities, and natural features throughout the State. The program's database, on the Wisconsin DNR website, identifies species and natural communities that are currently tracked by the NHI. As of July 2015, NHI tracked 29 species in the Town of Dell Prairie. Four species have an endangered status, and one has a threatened status in Wisconsin; no species in the Town have a federal status. Of the 29 species tracked by NHI 12 are communities, 10 are plants, and 7 are animals or insects.

Wisconsin's biodiversity goals are to identify, protect and manage native plants, animals, and natural communities from the very common to critically endangered for present and future generations. Knowledge, appreciation, and stewardship of Wisconsin's native species and ecosystems are critical to their survival and greater benefit to society.

### **Soil Resources**

Soils are an important natural resource. To better guide development and land use within the Town, it is important to know and understand soil properties and their limitations. Soil properties affecting potential land use decisions include depth to bedrock, slope, drainage/permeability, shrink-swell potential, and

flooding. Soil characteristics can vary widely across a given area, but generalizations can be made based on a soil series, which is a type of soil profile. The soil survey describes the characteristics of different types of soils including engineering properties, physical and chemical properties, and soil and water features.

As with most areas in Central Wisconsin, the Town has a variety of soil types within its boundaries. According to the USDA Web Soil Survey of Adams County, four dominant soil series were identified within the Town: Tint sand, Ponycreek complex, Aldo sand, and Partridge loamy fine sand. See the Soil Survey for more detailed information.

### **Agricultural Resources**

At the Adams County level, irrigated vegetable farming (e.g. potatoes, corn, snap beans, soybeans, and peas) is the primary agricultural enterprise. Cranberry production is increasingly important too. Two cattle CAFO's have been built since 2010 in the County, and a third is began construction in 2015.

Approximately 4,517 acres of land in the Town of Dell Prairie are currently used for agriculture, which is 21.6% of total land. Additionally, 61.8% of total land is currently woodlands, some of which may be agricultural forests.

### **Adams County Natural Resource Trends**

#### **Problems and Causes**

Wind erosion continues to be a big problem in Adams County. As companies/producers are getting bigger with more fields to harvest, harvesting takes longer and they are not able to get a cover crop planted in September. Moldboard plowing is more prevalent due to requirements by canneries for clean tillage to reduce crop contamination.

Trees are being taken down right to the property line – windbreaks are not being left or they are being mowed down or cut back.

Newly listed 303(d) waters in 2014: Lake Sherwood, Lake Arrowhead, and Friendship Lake – they became listed mainly due to increased levels of nutrients caused by cumulative actions by adjacent riparian owners, upstream inputs and internal loading. Lake Camelot (next to lakes Sherwood and Arrowhead) is likely to be 303(d) listed in 2016.



Irrigated farmland

#### ***Changes in Land Use***

- Deforestation occurring for large row crops, more irrigation, more CAFOs, and more subdivisions - especially along the streams.
- Changes in water quantity due to high capacity wells increasing in number of wells and amount pumped per well, which may lead to more intermittent streams.
- Changes in water quality – more polluted runoff, manure storage issues, nutrient runoff, and more blue-green algae problems.
- Loss of smaller farms and more big farms likely.
- Frac sand mining and related pollutant issues.
- Need to find balance between protecting waters and agricultural uses.

#### ***Changes in Climate***

- More intermittent streams.
- More wind erosion – need for wind breaks, cover crops and conservation tillage.
- More water erosion due to big storm events and flashier storm events.
- Water table not being replenished as fast as being depleted, and lakes may be affected.

#### ***Tourism and Economy***

- Tourism will change depending on water quality and quantity.
- Need for old septic systems to be inspected and repaired/replaced.
- Changes in land and water quality or quantity

could negatively affect property values and county income base.

## **Cultural Resources**

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There are several original farm homes and farm buildings in the town, but there has been no historical examination of these structures for inclusion on the Historic Registry.

Two Century Farmsteads exist within the town. A century farmstead has maintained family ownership for at least 100 years. The Wisconsin State Fair recognized the Walter Dale Helm & the Margaret Page farmsteads in 2000.

### ***Dell Prairie century farmsteads***

- Walter Dale Helm on 30 acres in T14N R7E Sec 6 was settled in 1887.
- Margaret Page on 80 acres in T14N R6E Sec 12 was settled in 1895.

The Town has two cemeteries within the boundaries, one located off Hwy 13 at Gem Dr and one on Golden Ct near County Hwy B.

## **Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps**

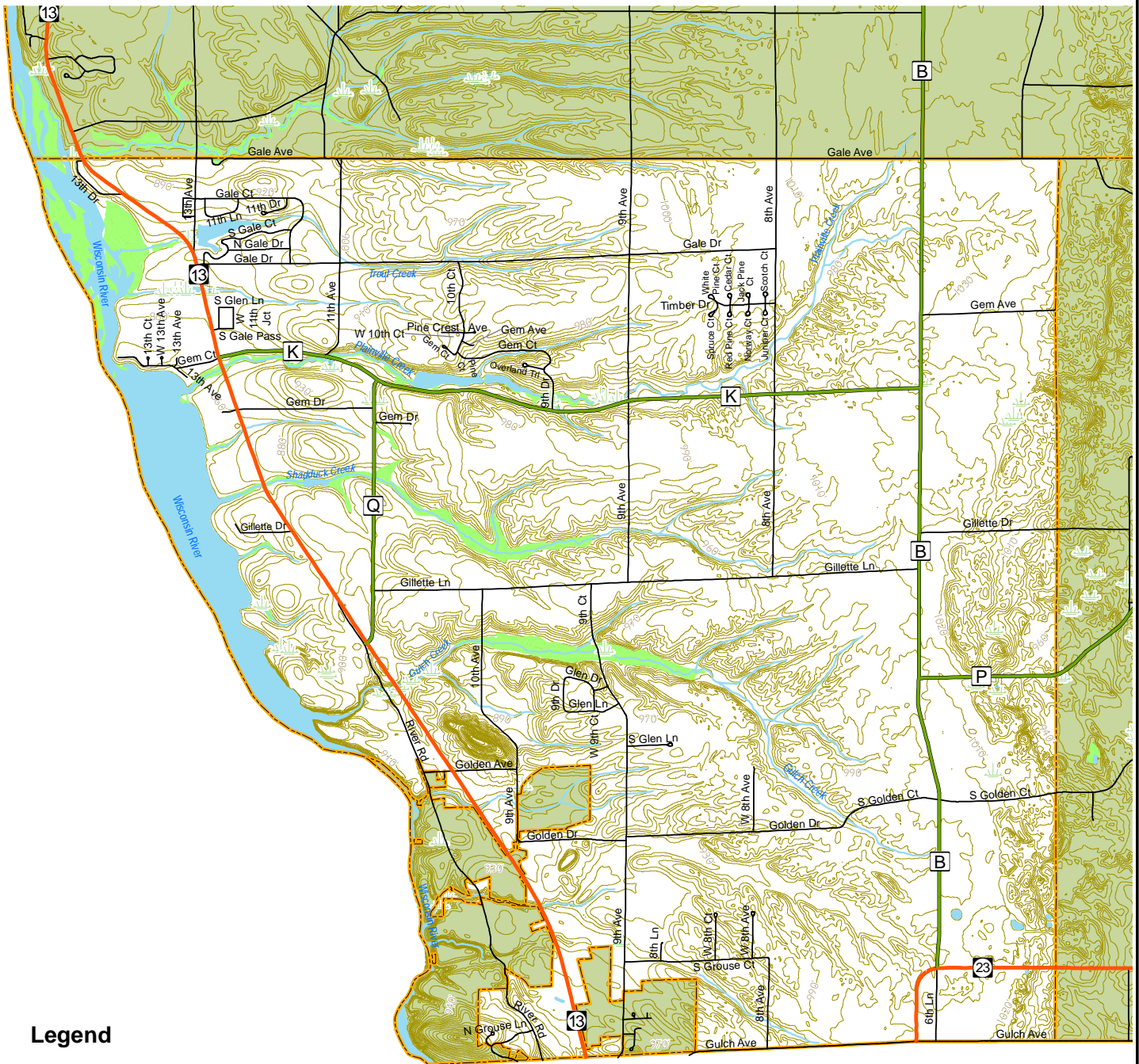
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Natural and Cultural Resources Goal: *The Town of Dell Prairie manages natural and cultural resources in a balanced way for current and future generations' health, enjoyment, and benefit.*

1. Protect natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, woodlands, and groundwater resources.
  - a. New development in the Town is encouraged in areas that will not impact local natural resources and discouraged in areas that have significant natural resources.
  - b. Consider the use of regulatory tools, such as transfer of development rights or purchase of development rights, to protect sensitive areas.
  - c. Protect and maintain high water quality standards within the Town.
  - d. Ensure that public access to the Town's surface water resources continues in the future.
2. Protect natural resources that are economically productive, such as farmlands and commercial forests.
  - a. Existing agricultural uses and buildings should be taken into consideration when locating new development to minimize conflicts.

- b. Support the diversification of farming types and practices to maintain agriculture as a viable economic activity.
  - c. Encourage local farmers to participate in the Farmland Preservation Program to preserve farmland for long-term agricultural use.
  - d. Encourage and support owners of woodlands to develop forest management plans and enroll in the Managed Forest Law program.
  - e. Ensure that confined animal feeding operations are located within agricultural areas and maintain a quarter mile buffer from designated residential areas.
3. Preserve cultural, historic, and architecturally significant sites and buildings.
    - a. Work with the Adams County Historical Society, tribes, and others to provide guidance in the identification and protection of historic and cultural resources.
    - b. Review development proposals to minimize potential impacts to the historical and cultural resources of the Town.





**Legend**

- Minor Civil Divisions
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Contours 10ft
- Wetlands
- Wetlands >2 Acres
- DFirm Floodplains
- Water



Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, FEMA  
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# HOUSING

Housing characteristics and trends are an important component of a comprehensive plan. The physical location of housing determines the need of many public services and facilities.

## Previous Studies

### *Regional Livability Plan*

Housing is one of four elements included in the Regional Livability Report, adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in 2015. The Housing Assessment Report, a component of the Plan, looks in detail at the housing stock and the affordability of housing throughout the 10-county region and identifies trends and issues facing housing. The Regional Livability Plan addresses two issues: the type of housing stock and housing affordability. The housing goal of the Plan is as follows:

- Goal 1: Promote a variety of safe and affordable housing options that meet the needs of all community members.

### *Wisconsin State Consolidated Housing Plan*

The Consolidated Housing Plan is required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the application process required of the State in accessing formula program funds of Small Cities Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships, Emergency Shelter Grants, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS. The State Consolidated Housing Plan (CHP) is primarily focused on how government action can address special needs, not on the workings of the private housing market.

## Housing Inventory

The number of housing units in Dell Prairie has increased over the last two decades from 638 in 1990, to 754 in 2000, and 957 in 2010. This is an increase of 18.2 percent from 1990 to 2000, 26.9 percent from 2000 to 2010, and 50 percent over the entire period. This 26.9 percent increase in housing units is compared to a 17 percent increase in households and a 12 percent increase in population. These numbers

indicate housing growth is strong in the town. This is due in large part to an increasing proportion of seasonal housing and decreasing household sizes.

In 2000, 553 (73.3%) of the 754 housing units were occupied, while 201 were vacant. The average household size was 2.51 people. In 2010 there were 957 total housing units, with 649 units (67.8%) occupied. The owner occupancy rate in the town has held steady near 86 percent, which is much higher than the state rate of 68.1 percent, and slightly higher than the county rate of 83.1 percent.

Seasonal, recreational, and occasional use housing made up 26 percent of the housing stock in 2010, or 249 units, see **Table 7**. Seasonal housing has grown at a rate much higher than the growth of total units, and made up a higher proportion of the total units in 2010 than in 2000. Average household size has been continuously decreasing to 2.45 people per household, down from 2.72 people in 1990.

About 14 percent of the units were built prior to 1960, 43 percent between 1960 and 1989, and the remaining 43.4 percent were built between 1990 and 2010. Approximately 209 units (about 20%) were built between 2000 and 2010. These numbers indicate a relatively new housing stock, with fewer units that may be in need of major repairs.

Nearly half of the housing units are three bedroom units, and 35 percent are two bedroom units. Seventy four percent are single family detached dwellings, five percent are single family attached, and nearly 20 percent are mobile homes. This is a significantly higher proportion of mobile homes than the state average, but is very close to the county average.

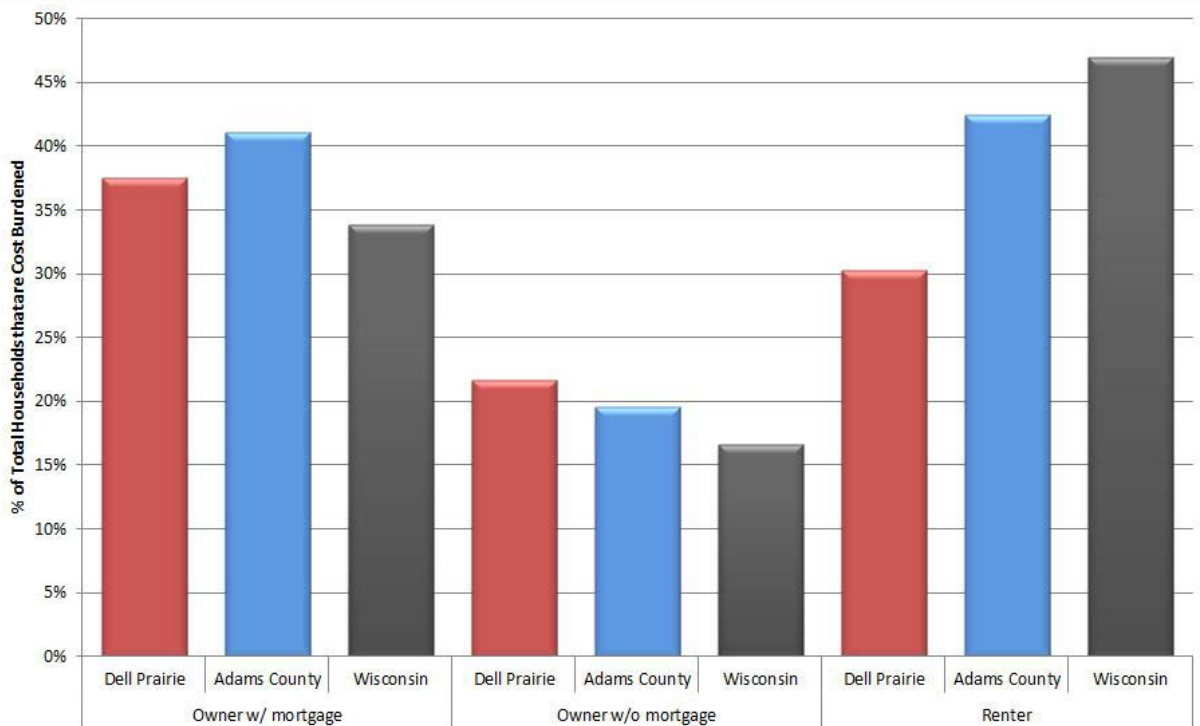
The median home value of owner occupied units in 2010 is approximately \$167,000. About half of owner occupied units have a mortgage, while the other half do not. Median monthly owner costs are \$1,451 per month for units with a mortgage, and \$438 for units without a mortgage. The median gross rent (including utilities) is \$685.

**Table 7 - Housing Change**

|                     | 2000  | 2010  | Net Change | % Change |
|---------------------|-------|-------|------------|----------|
| # of Total Units    | 754   | 957   | 203        | 26.9%    |
| # of Seasonal Units | 164   | 249   | 85         | 51.8%    |
| Seasonal % of Total | 21.8% | 26.0% | 4.2%       | 19.3%    |

Source: U.S. Census

**Display 4: Households with Housing Cost Burden, 2010**



Source: 2006-2010 American Community Survey

In order for housing to be considered affordable, a household should not pay more than 30 percent of their income towards housing costs, anything above 30 percent is considered cost burdened. Thirty eight percent of owner households with a mortgage, 22 percent of owner households without a mortgage, and 30 percent of renter households pay more than 30 percent of their income towards housing (including utilities). This indicates a gap between incomes and housing costs. For owners this is a higher proportion than the state overall, meaning housing costs relative to incomes are generally higher in the town of Dell Prairie than Wisconsin. **Display 4** shows cost burdens for Dell Prairie, the county and the state. Further analysis reveals this gap is most significant with households with incomes below \$35,000 per year. These figures do not include housing that is vacant or for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

**Future Need**

As a result of the projected population increase, the town needs to accommodate at least an additional 235 housing units by 2035 to accommodate projected household growth, see **Table 8**. These projections do not include the development of additional seasonal and recreational housing, which is likely to occur based on past trends. If the 10 year growth trend for housing development is maintained, the total number of housing units will be approximately 1,773 and the number of seasonal units will be 754 by 2035, see **Table 9**. The amount of land consumed by future residential development will vary depending on where the development takes place and the form of the development. For example, conservation subdivisions would use less land for the same amount of housing units, and provide more protected open space.

**Table 8 - Population Projections**

| Year | Population | Households |
|------|------------|------------|
| 2015 | 1,630      | 720        |
| 2020 | 1,780      | 780        |
| 2025 | ,1915      | 856        |
| 2030 | 2,025      | 918        |
| 2035 | 2,070      | 952        |
| 2040 | 2,075      | 969        |

Source: U.S. Census, DOA

**Table 9 - Housing Projections**

| Year | Population | Households |
|------|------------|------------|
| 2015 | 957        | 249        |
| 2020 | 1,214      | 378        |
| 2025 | 1,378      | 476        |
| 2030 | 1,563      | 599        |
| 2035 | 1,773      | 754        |
| 2040 | 2,012      | 969        |

Source: U.S. Census, DOA

## Housing Programs

The following are housing programs available to the Town:

The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) administers the Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC). Investors who allocate a number of units as affordable to low-income families for a certain period of time (usually 15 years) are allowed to take a credit on their income tax.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture-Rural Development (USDA-RD) is focused on rural areas. A list of available programs follows:

- Section 502 Homeownership Direct Loan program of the Rural Health Service (RHS) provides loans to help low-income households purchase and prepare sites or purchase, build, repair, renovate, or relocate homes.
- Section 502 Mutual Self-Help Housing Loans are designed to help very-low-income households construct their own homes. Targeted families include those who cannot buy affordable housing through conventional means. Participating families perform approximately 65 percent of the construction under qualified supervision.
- Section 504 Very-Low-Income Housing Repair program, provides loans and grants to low-income homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their homes. Improvements must make the homes more safe and sanitary or remove health or safety hazards.
- Section 515 Multi-Family Housing Loan program supports the construction of multi-family housing for low-income residents. Under the program, which has been in operation in Wisconsin since 1969, USDA underwrites fifty-year mortgages at a one percent interest rate in exchange for an agreement to provide housing for low and very low-income residents.
- Section 521 Rural Rental Assistance program provides an additional subsidy for households with incomes too low to pay RHS-subsidized rents.
- Section 533 Rural Housing Preservation Grants are designed to assist sponsoring organizations in the repair or rehabilitation of low-income or very-low-income housing. Assistance is available for landlords or members of a cooperative.



Farmhouse

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers the following programs:

- The HUD Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program finances land acquisition and site development associated with self-help housing for low-income families.
- The HOME Investment Partnership Program aims to encourage the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing. HOME funds may be used for rental assistance, assistance to homebuyers, new construction, rehabilitation, or acquisition of rental housing.
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers are administered locally by the Central Wisconsin Community Action Corporation (CWCAC). The program is open to any housing unit where the owner agrees to participate and where the unit satisfies the standards. Congress is considering replacing the current voucher program with a block grant to states. If enacted, eligibility criteria for the program may change.
- The Small Cities Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is the rural component of HUD's Community Development Block Grant program, which is administered by the State of Wisconsin, Department of Administration. The state CDBG program provides assistance for the development of affordable housing and economic development efforts targeted to low- and moderate-income people.

## **Housing Issues**

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### ***Affordability***

Median and per capita income levels are generally lower than the state in Adams County. For many of these people this poses a difficulty in paying for decent, safe and sanitary housing. This fits a pattern throughout rural America, where rural households had a greater housing cost burden than their urban counterparts.

Multi-family housing and accessory dwelling units are two more affordable housing choices. One of the more persistent objections to multi-family housing and accessory dwelling units is that these units compromise the property values of single-family dwellings. In recent years evidence has emerged that, rather than diminishing the value of single-family housing, well-designed and maintained multi-family housing can increase the value of nearby neighborhoods as well as reduce overall local government costs.

Local governments can take actions to foster affordable housing. An affordable Housing Trust Fund is one such alternative, perhaps using a Small Cities CDBG grant to start the fund. The Low Income Housing Tax Credit program (LIHTC) can be used to help developers construct new affordable housing units.

### ***Elderly/Retiree Housing Needs***

Adams County is aging, and not just as a result of residents getting older. The county is getting more and more older people who move there to retire. This influx of seniors has a number of results: it has increased the population and led to the construction of many new housing units; it has increased the median age in the county; and it has brought many new residents into the county from a number of different backgrounds and with personal assets that have expanded the local economy. In one way though, it has introduced a different dynamic into the county from its rural-agricultural past.

This change creates a special set of housing issues. As people age they have more need for specialized services. The most obvious of these is for health care, but there is a more subtle relationship between an aging population and their housing needs. An integrated view of senior housing needs to be developed that includes a continuum of housing options ranging from assistance to age in place all the way to assisted care facilities.

### ***Manufactured Housing***

One of the most widely used and easily available forms of affordable housing is the manufactured home. Modern manufactured housing is virtually indistinguishable from site-built housing, but can be constructed for roughly 75 percent of the cost. Land-lease communities, which operate very much like the traditional mobile home park, where residents own the house, which is taxed as personal property not real estate, and rent the site and which can include many shared amenities, are another option. Manufactured housing offers a realistic alternative for providing affordable homes that can fit well with existing neighborhoods or be developed as new communities.

### ***Subsidized/Special-needs Housing***

There are 177 subsidized housing units in Adams County, or one unit for every 118 people. By contrast in Juneau County there is one unit for every 70 people. Nearly two thirds of these units are designated for the elderly. A third are for families and six are designed for the disabled. Disabled and low-income citizens often require special housing accommodations. Two programs which help fund the development of subsidized housing and assist residents are the USDA-RD Section 515 program, which supports the construction of multi-family housing for low-income residents, and the HUD Section 8 housing choice voucher program, which provides eligible families with vouchers that they can use to secure housing in the private market.

## **Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps**

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Housing Goal: *Town of Dell Prairie provides decent, safe, affordable housing options that meet the needs of all community members.*

- 1.** Preserve and protect environmentally sensitive natural resource areas through housing location decisions.
  - a. Encourage small lot residential in areas contiguous with existing housing and discourage small lot residential in rural areas.
  - b. Encourage residential development away from prime farmland areas.
  - c. Encourage residential development away from areas shown to flood hazard, potential groundwater contamination, wetlands, and other sensitive areas.
  
- 2.** Encourage a variety of housing types as well as land for new residential development.
  - a. Support adequate affordable housing for all individuals consistent with the character of the community.
  - b. Ensure that local land use controls and permitting procedures do not discourage or prevent the provision of affordable housing options.
  - c. Support the development of senior and special needs housing within the Town.
  - d. Encourage the development of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices, where applicable.

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# TRANSPORTATION

The transportation system in the town includes all the state, county and local roads. The local transportation network is an important factor for the safe movement of people and goods, as well as to the physical development of the town. There is no transit, rail, air or water transportation service within the town's jurisdiction.

The Adams County Transit System operates out of Adams/Friendship; the nearest rail service is provided by Canadian Pacific through Wisconsin Dells; and the nearest commercial air service is available at the Dane County Regional Airport near the City of Madison. The Baraboo/Wisconsin Dells Airport provides the nearest air cargo service. There are no water transportation facilities in the area.

## **State and Regional Transportation Plans:**

### **Connections 2030**

Connections 2030 is the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) long-range transportation plan for the state. Adopted in 2009, the plan addresses all forms of transportation over a 20-year planning horizon: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit.

### **Regional Livability Plan**

Transportation is one of four elements included in the Regional Livability Report, adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in 2015. The Transportation Assessment Report, a component of the Plan, looks in detail at the transportation network through the 10-county region and identifies trends and issues facing transportation. The Regional Livability Plan addresses three issues: the modes of transportation to work, the age of drivers in the region, and the high transportation maintenance cost. The three transportation goals of the Plan are as follows:

- Goal 6: Provide and improve transportation access to people of all ages and abilities to ensure lifelong mobility and accessibility.
- Goal 7: Fund the maintenance and expansion of the transportation system.
- Goal 8: Enhance the regional economy by supporting airports and freight rail.

## **Road Network**

The road system in the Town of Dell Prairie plays a key role in development by providing both access to land and serving to move people and goods through the area. The interrelationship between land use and the road system makes it necessary for the development of each to be balanced with the other. Types and intensities of land uses have a direct relationship to the traffic on roadways that serve those land uses. Intensely developed land often generates high volumes of traffic. If this traffic is not planned for, safety can be seriously impaired for both local and through traffic flows. See the Transportation Map, **Map 4**.

The Town of Dell Prairie road network consists of roughly 8.15 miles of state highway, 13.32 miles of county highway, and 50.19 miles of local roads. The Town utilizes the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) to maintain an inventory of local roads and monitor conditions and improvements of its roads. This system enables the town to budget and keep track of roads that are in need of repair.

## **Traffic and Safety**

Traffic generated and attracted by any new land use can increase the volume throughout the highway system and increase congestion on the roadway system keeping property from reaching its full potential value. Even without the creation of new access points, changes in land uses can alter the capacity of the roadway because more, and possibly different, kinds of vehicles than before, enter, leave, and add to the traffic flow. Uncontrolled division of land tends to affect highways by intensifying the use of abutting lands, which impairs



County Road

safety and impedes traffic movements.

The Wisconsin DOT conducts average daily traffic counts, which show the number of vehicles expected to pass a given location on an average day of the year. Locations counted are on a rotating three-year cycle for rural locations. In the Town, local roads were last counted in 2011, while counts along HWY 13, a more major road, took place in 2014. See the Transportation Map for traffic counts by location taken. Traffic counts have increased by an average of 200 cars per count location since the 2001 count.

As development continues and land use changes, the cost of maintaining the road system must be increased. More traffic requires more maintenance and expansion of the local road system.

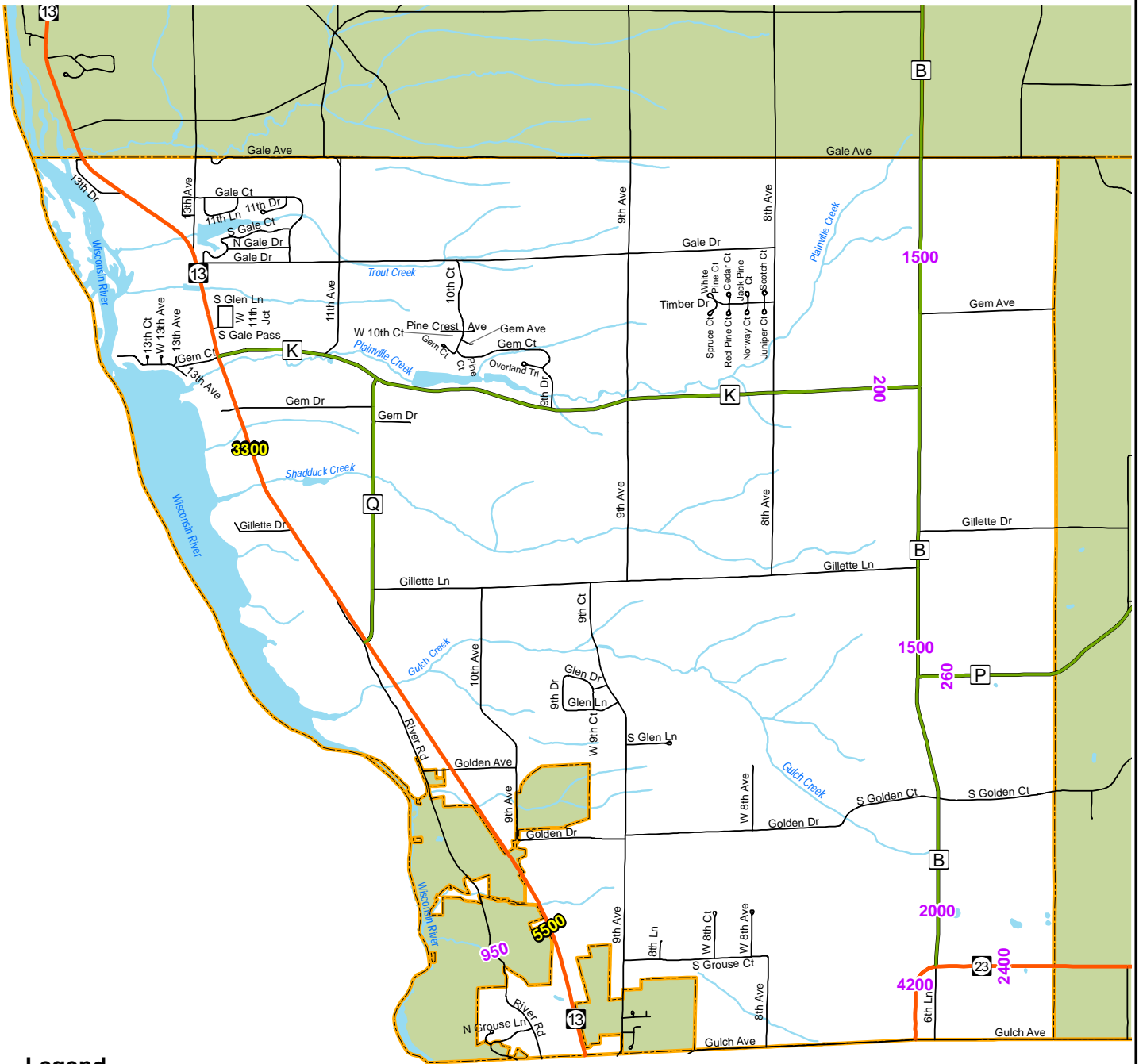


Country Road

## Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps

**Transportation Goal:** *Town of Dell Prairie maintains local transportation infrastructure to the highest standards to allow safe and efficient movement of people, goods, and services.*

1. Provide a multi-modal transportation system to meet the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.
  - a. Support a county-wide transit system.
  - b. Promote the development of multi-use trails, trail linkages, or wide shoulders as part of new development proposals, where appropriate.
2. Support and maintain a safe and efficient town road network.
  - a. Prepare and update a 5-year Road Improvement Plan to improve existing roads and plan for frontage roads where needed.
  - b. Work with the County on all county road projects in the Town.
  - c. Limit heavy traffic volumes and vehicles of very high weight to roads that have been constructed or upgraded for such use.
  - d. Consider future road locations, extensions, or connection when reviewing development plans and proposals.
  - e. Consider roadway access on new development proposals with a view to increase safety and preserve capacity.
  - f. Utilize WISLR to inventory and rate local roads.



**Legend**

- Minor Civil Divisions
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Water
- Daily Average Traffic Count, 2011
- Daily Average Traffic Count, 2014



Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Wis DOT  
 This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey of the actual boundary of any property depicted. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



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# UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Utilities and community facilities, provided by either public or private entities, are critical for community development. Utilities include electrical service, natural gas, telephone service, and cable communications, among others. Community facilities include local governmental buildings, libraries, educational institutions, and maintenance and storage facilities, as well as services like police service, fire protection, and emergency medical services.

As a small rural town relatively few utilities exist. There are no sanitary sewer, storm water systems, water supply, power plants, health care facilities, childcare facilities, schools or libraries. The town administers curbside refuse collection for residents. A high voltage electric transmission line follows River Rd, CTH Q and 11th Ave. on its way to a substation in Springville. There is a public access point to the Wisconsin River off Gem Ct.

The Town of Dell Prairie has agreements with the City of Wisconsin Dells for fire and EMS service through the Kilbourn Fire Department. The Adams County Sheriff's Department provides police protection for the town. Clinic and hospital facilities are available in Adams/Friendship and Wisconsin Dells. Major regional medical centers for specialized care are available in Marshfield or Madison.

Local community facilities include a Town Hall. The Town Hall building is owned and maintained by the Town and functions as a multi-purpose building. See the Utilities & Community Facilities Map, [Map 5](#), for the Town Hall's location.

Two cemeteries exist in Dell Prairie, and their locations are shown on Map 5. Minimum acreage requirements exist for cemeteries established on or after November 1, 1991 unless the cemetery is owned by a religious association, or the Town enacts an ordinance allowing new cemeteries of less than 20 acres to be constructed. Plenty of undeveloped land is available throughout the town for the creation of a new cemetery when necessary.

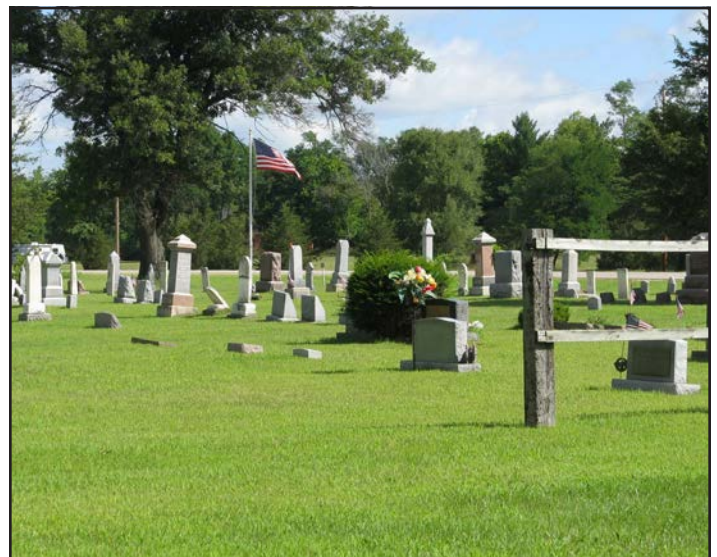
The Adams County Library and the Lester Public Library of Rome are the two libraries located in Adams County. The Kilbourn Public Library in Wisconsin Dells is the nearest library for Town residents. All of these libraries are affiliated with the South Central Library System and provide library services for the town.



Dell Prairie Town Hall Building



Town of Dell Prairie Garage



Cemetery

The Town of Dell Prairie is part of the School District of Wisconsin Dells, which serves an area of about 186 square miles in Sauk, Juneau, Adams, Columbia, and Marquette Counties. In 2015, the District served a student population of 1,789 students, with approximately 495 students in a four-year high school, 345 in middle school, and 949 in elementary schools.

Generally, the Town of Dell Prairie is a rural town with existing facilities that are sufficient for the planning period.

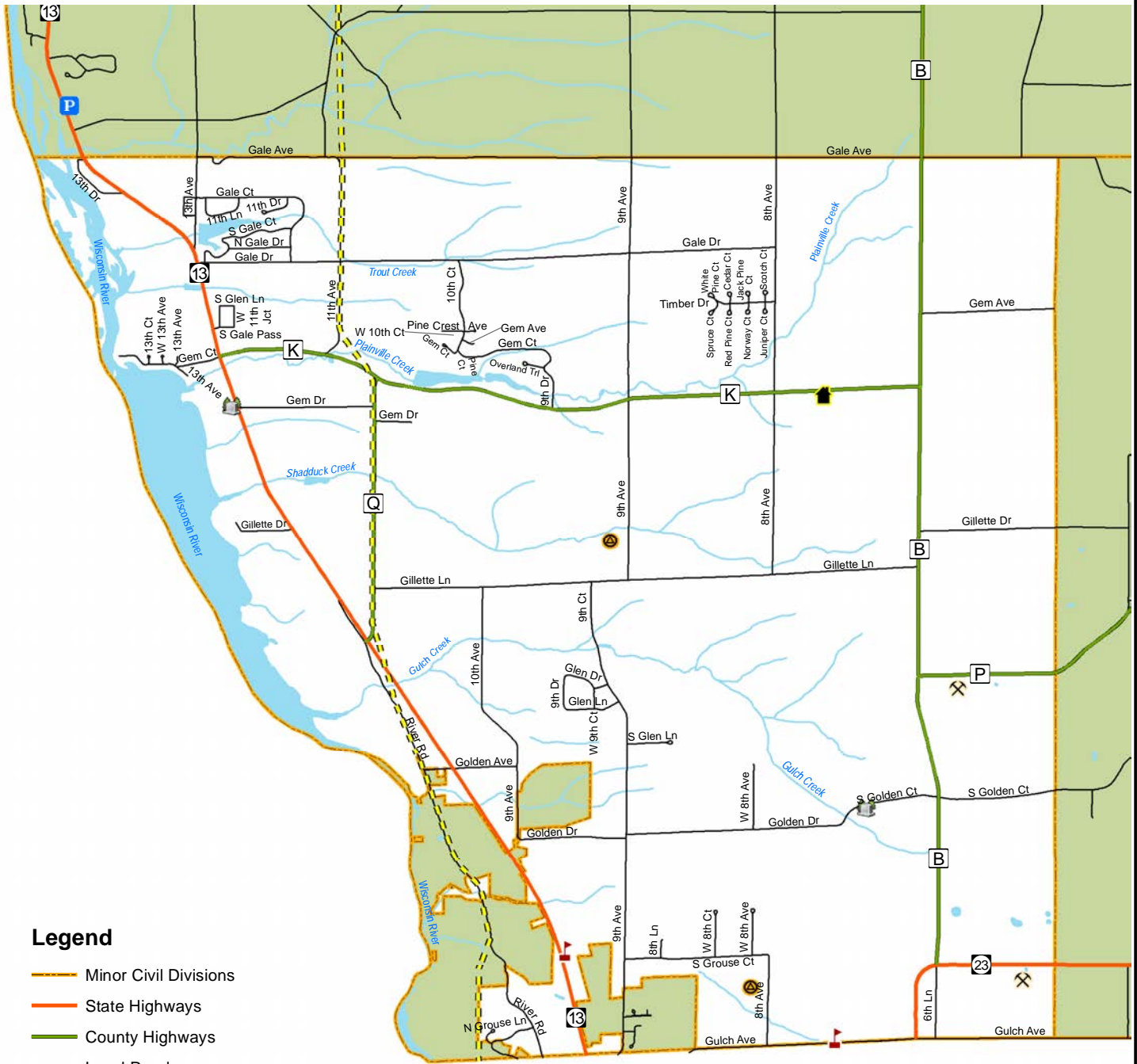


Prairie Cemetery

## **Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps**

Utilities and Community Facilities Goal: *Town of Dell Prairie provides opportunities for utility infrastructure and community facilities to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.*

1. Ensure utility infrastructure is safe and sufficient to meet the needs of the community.
  - a. Develop and maintain a Capital Improvement Plan for major equipment purchases.
  - b. Continue to provide fire, ambulance, and first responder services to residents.
  - c. Consider sharing equipment and services across town boundaries to increase coverage and reduce costs.
  - d. Encourage concentrated residential and other developments to consider the feasibility and water quality impacts of wastewater collection and treatment systems.
2. Provide facilities and services to support a strong, healthy community.
  - a. Continue to open the Town Hall as a multi-purpose building for community functions.
  - b. Explore opportunities to develop integrated, multi-use trail systems and recreational facilities.



**Legend**

- Minor Civil Divisions
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Cemetery
- Former Landfill
- Non-Metallic Mines
- Parking Area
- Schools
- Town Hall
- High Voltage Powerline
- Water



Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC  
 This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey of the actual boundary of any property depicted. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



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# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The economic development chapter provides an overview of the local and county economy and workforce. The economy includes all activity related to production, consumption, and trade of goods and services in an area. The workforce is all the people engaged in or available for work in an area.

## Previous Studies

### ***Regional Livability Plan***

Economic Development is one of four elements included in the Regional Livability Report, adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) in 2015. The Economic Development Assessment Report, a component of the Plan, looks in detail at the economic health of the 10-county region and identifies trends and issues facing the local economy. The Regional Livability Plan addresses three issues: the disparity between the available labor force and employment, the need for a living wage, and broadband internet access. The four economic development goals of the Plan are as follows:

- Goal 2: Ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce.
- Goal 3: Support and develop a diverse economic base ensuring economic growth and resiliency.
- Goal 4: Support infrastructure needed for economic development.
- Goal 5: Develop tourism and the knowledge-based economy into leading economic sectors.

### ***Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)***

Adams County is one of ten counties included in the North Central Wisconsin Economic Development District as designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. The NCWRPC is the agency that is responsible for maintaining that federal designation. As part of maintaining that designation, the NCWRPC annually prepares a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy report. The report serves to summarize and assess economic development activities of the past year and present new and modified program strategies for the upcoming year. Key components of this regional plan include an inventory of the physical geography of the region and its resident population. Labor, income, and employment data are reviewed as well as an in-depth analysis of the economic status of the region.

## Town of Dell Prairie Economic Analysis

As discussed in previous sections, the town has been an agriculturally based community for generations. Farming is still the dominant economic sector occurring in the town. Nearly 38 percent of the total land is used for agriculture.

## Employment

Scattered throughout the town there are small businesses, other than farms, that employ approximately 672 total people. Over half of those that work in Dell Prairie are in the Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services industry, with the second largest industry being the construction industry. This is reflective of the tourism sector driven by the Wisconsin Dells. The remaining industries each have less than 100 workers.



Hovlands Service Center



Morse Powersports Center

## **Labor Force**

Approximately 15 percent of the 799 employed residents in Dell Prairie work in Dell Prairie, with the remainder commuting out for work to areas such as Wisconsin Dells, Baraboo and Portage. The labor force in Dell Prairie consists of 69.6 percent of the population, or 859 people. The unemployment rate is 7.0 percent, lower than the county rate of 8.4 percent but higher than the state rate of 6.7 percent. There are several industrial parks nearby in the Cities of Wisconsin Rapids and Adams, as well as the Village of Friendship that provide employment opportunities. There are no major redevelopment areas in the town.

The two employment sectors with the most Dell Prairie residents employed in 1990 were Retail trade and Manufacturing. The dominant industries changed by 2000, with Art, entertainment, recreation, accommodation & food services and Educational, health, & social services as the top two industry employers. These two industries have remained dominant through 2010. In 2010, Retail trade was the third most employed sector, Manufacturing was fourth and Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services was sixth.

There are no existing contaminated commercial or industrial sites in the Town that have available utilities and services.

## **Adams County Inventory & Trends**

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Due to the amount of economic activity which takes place exclusively within the Town and the truth that the local workforce is primarily employed outside the Town, this section will look at the economic activity within Adams County.

There are many opportunities for economic development in Adams County. Prospective businesses may utilize the county's revolving loan fund or other financial packages. Adams County is also a member of the Juneau-Adams-Marquette (JAM) Development Zone, which provides tax credits to businesses locating or expanding in the county. Adams County is also rich in natural resources, which provides an opportunity for developing the tourism industry and growth in seasonal or year-round residents. Linking the County with the recreational activities of the Wisconsin Dells would definitely generate growth in the tourism industry.

Adams County, like many rural areas, is threatened economically by surrounding population centers. Competing with larger communities and their

respective amenities and incentive programs is difficult for smaller communities. Businesses and industries often seek locations with a high volume of traffic, easy transit, and a diverse labor force. Adams County is lacking in many of these areas and therefore the County must be careful that its economic development efforts are not wasted in direct competition with the efforts of larger surrounding communities.

## **Economic Overview**

Nationally, the three industries projected to have the most employment growth over the next decade are health care and social assistance, professional and business services, and construction.

The county's population increased two times faster than the state between 1990 and 2010. If this trend continues, the county will add another 6,900 residents by 2030. However, more recent trends from 2000 to 2010 show a drastic slowdown in population growth. The Wisconsin DOA estimates the growth over the next 20 years to be approximately 3,000 additional residents. Much of that growth will likely be concentrated along the Wisconsin River. This increased population will generate additional demand for services. The total number of persons employed in Adams County has grown by 63 percent in last twenty years, but many residents are still commuting outside the county to work in places like Wisconsin Rapids and Wisconsin Dells.

Economic analysis indicates that the county's economy is primarily driven by agriculture, but trends indicate a shift toward service industries. According to a 2011 report on the impact of agriculture in Wisconsin, Adams County derives approximately 14 percent of its employment from on-farm and food processing related jobs. The county appears to be making a transition from slow-growth industries into rapid growth industries, but this shift will necessitate workforce development and training before the economy and employment reaches equilibrium. Adams County has remained competitive in agriculture, manufacturing, transportation, and utilities during the past twenty years.

## **Economic Sectors**

Overall, in 2010, there were 4,578 persons employed in the 12 broad economic sectors in the county, an increase of over 60 percent since 1990, see **Table 10**.

Between 1990 and 2010, the three fastest growing sectors were leisure and hospitality, professional & business services, and other services. In terms of total employment, leisure and hospitality is the largest

**Table 10 - Adams County Average Annual Employment by Sector**

| Industry Super Sector (NAICS)    | 1990  |      | 2000  |      | 2010  |      | Change 1990-2010 |      |
|----------------------------------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|------------------|------|
|                                  | Total | %    | Total | %    | Total | %    | Net              | %    |
| Natural Resources & Mining       | 233   | 8%   | 187   | 5%   | 399   | 9%   | 166              | 71%  |
| Construction                     | 113   | 4%   | 192   | 5%   | 153   | 3%   | 40               | 35%  |
| Manufacturing                    | 413   | 15%  | 396   | 10%  | 346   | 8%   | -67              | -16% |
| Trade, Transportation, Utilities | 496   | 18%  | 675   | 18%  | 669   | 15%  | 173              | 35%  |
| Information                      | 24    | 1%   | 35    | 1%   | S*    | S    | S                | S    |
| Financial Activities             | 68    | 2%   | 70    | 2%   | 90    | 2%   | 22               | 32%  |
| Professional & Business Services | 42    | 1%   | 142   | 4%   | 188   | 4%   | 146              | 348% |
| Education & Health Services      | 537   | 19%  | 743   | 20%  | 742   | 16%  | 205              | 38%  |
| Leisure & Hospitality            | 253   | 9%   | 616   | 16%  | 1158  | 25%  | 905              | 358% |
| Other Services                   | 75    | 3%   | 100   | 3%   | 131   | 3%   | 56               | 75%  |
| Public Administration            | 562   | 20%  | 632   | 17%  | 702   | 15%  | 140              | 25%  |
| Unclassified                     | 0     | 0%   | 0     | 0%   | S     | S    | S                | S    |
| Totals:                          | 2,816 | 100% | 3,788 | 100% | 4,578 | 100% | 1,786            | 63%  |

Source: Dept of Workforce Development QCEW ES202  
 \*Data has been suppressed for confidentiality.

segment of the economy, followed by education & health services, and public administration. It should be noted that the number of employees in certain sectors, particularly those workers engaged in agriculture, forestry & fishing, may be understated because this information utilizes Department of Workforce Development and Bureau of Labor Statistics data; those who are self-employed or work in family businesses are not reflected in this data.

1. **Natural Resources and Mining:** Between 1990 and 2010, this sector grew substantially; however, this sector is small and is subject to wide range changes. The state's growth rate in this sector was 47 percent, while at the national level the sector grew by only three percent. About 399 persons are employed in this sector, nine percent of the county's employment.

This natural resource based sector is critical to the county and surrounding counties. Agricultural production of milk, potatoes, oats, barley and hay, snap beans, green peas, sweet corn, soybeans, and cranberries is critical for the dairies and food processing industries. The timber produced in the area supplies the lumber mills, the pulp and paper mills, the millwork and housing components industries and the factory-built housing industry. Non-metallic mining activity within the county

typically involves sand and gravel extraction for local use and some granite quarrying.

2. **Construction:** Between 1990 and 2010 this sector grew by 35 percent, outpacing both the state and national growth rates of nine and six percent. Over 150 persons are employed in this sector. Construction is the eighth-largest sector, accounting for about 3 percent of total employment.
3. **Manufacturing:** Between 1990 and 2010, this sector declined by 16 percent, which is lower than the state decline rate of 19 percent and far lower than the national rate of decline of 36 percent. Almost 350 persons are employed in this sector. Manufacturing is the sixth largest sector, accounting for about eight percent of total employment.
4. **Trade, Transportation, and Utilities:** Between 1990 and 2010, this sector grew by 35 percent outpacing the nine percent growth of both the state and national economies. This category includes wholesale and retail trade. Over 650 persons are employed in this sector. Trade, Transportation, and Utilities is the fourth-largest sector, accounting for over 15 percent of total employment.
5. **Financial Activities:** This includes finance, insurance, and real estate rental and leasing. Between 1990 and 2010, this sector grew by about

32 percent, which exceeded both the state and national growth rates of 23 and nine percent. About 90 persons are employed in this sector. Financial Activities is the tenth-largest sector, accounting for about two percent of total employment.

6. Professional and Business Services: Between 1990 and 2010, this sector grew by 348 percent, which far exceeded the state growth rate of 83 percent and the national growth rate of 60 percent. About 188 persons are employed in this sector. Professional and Business Services is the seventh largest sector, accounting for about four percent of total employment. It showed the second most growth over the 20 year period.
7. Education and Health Services: Between 1990 and 2010, this sector grew by about 38 percent, lagging both the state and national growth rates of 53 and 75 percent. Over 742 persons are employed in this sector. Education and Health Services is the second-largest sector, accounting for about 16 percent of total employment.
8. Leisure and Hospitality: Between 1990 and 2010, this sector grew by 358 percent, far outpacing both the state and national growth rates of 31 and 38 percent. Over 1,150 persons are employed in this sector. Leisure and Hospitality is the largest sector, accounting for about 25 percent of total employment. This sector also grew the most over the 20 year period.
9. Other Services: Between 1990 and 2010, this sector grew by 75 percent, outpacing the state and the national growth rates of 17 percent and 26 percent. Over 130 persons are employed in this sector. Other services are the ninth-largest sector in the county, accounting for about three percent of total employment.
10. Public Administration: Between 1990 and 2010, this sector grew by 25 percent outpacing the state

and the national growth rates of 17 percent and 22 percent. Over 700 persons are employed in this sector at the local, state and federal levels. Public Administration is the third-largest sector in the county, accounting for about 15 percent of total employment.

## Labor Force Analysis

### Labor Force

Overall, the labor force has grown from 6,310 in 1990 to 9,139 in 2010, see **Table 11**. That represents a growth of 44.8 percent. The labor force is defined as the number of persons, sixteen and over, that are employed or searching for employment. In 1990, 5,640 residents were employed and that increased to 8,354 in 2010, an increase of 48.1 percent. However, when looking at **Display 5** it is evident that working age population is expected to begin to decline in 2015, halting the growth of the labor force, assuming the participation rate among the working age population remains the same.

### Unemployment

In 1990, the county had 10.6 percent unemployment and the state 5.2 percent unemployment. In 2010, the county had 8.4 percent unemployment rate, compared to the state rate of 6.7 percent. Unemployment is defined as the difference between the total civilian labor force and total persons employed. Stay-at-home parents, retirees, or persons not searching for employment are not considered unemployed because they are not considered to be part of the labor force.

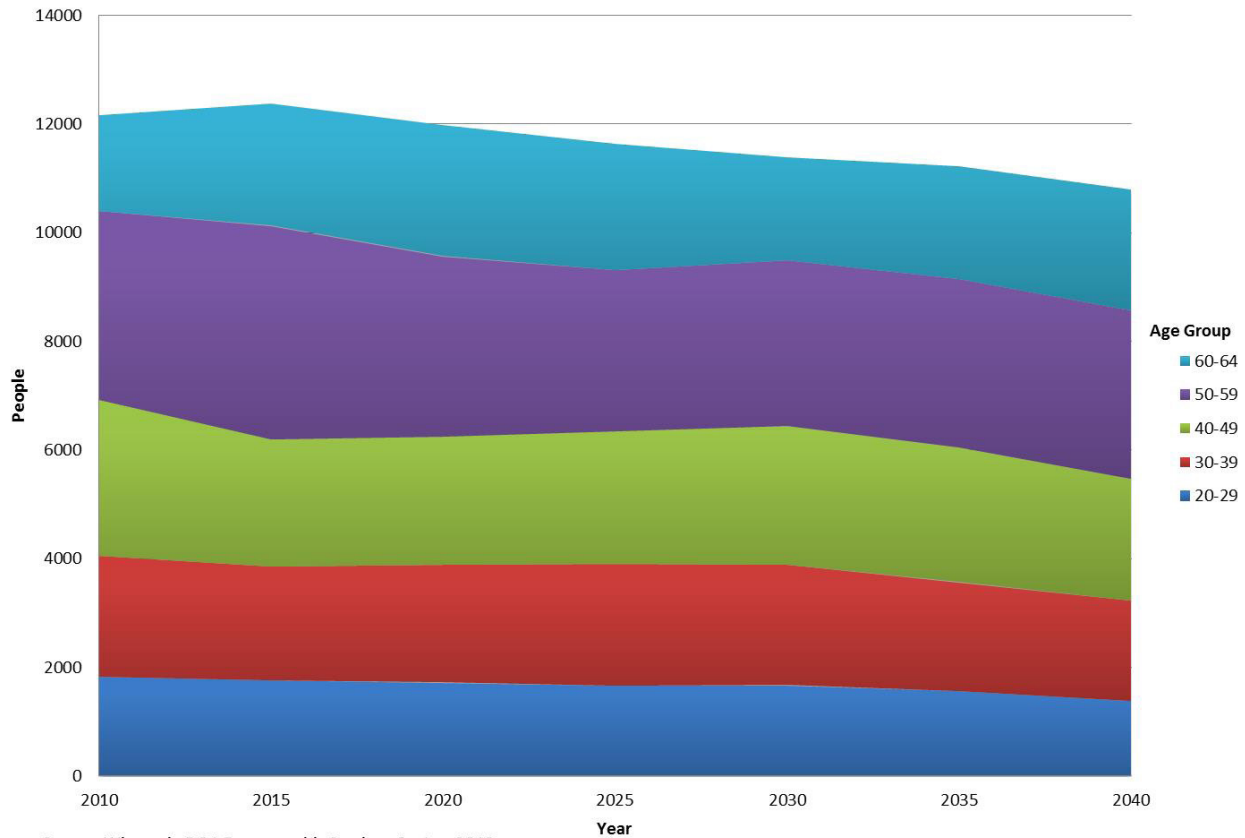
Over the last twenty years, Adams County has generally had higher unemployment rates than the state average. Adams County also has much more seasonal variability in unemployment than the state and the nation, with the winter months often have four percent higher unemployment. This is likely influenced by the tourism sector of the Wisconsin Dells and the seasonal population of the county.

**Table 11 - Labor Force**

| Adams County       | Adams County |       |       |                    | Wisconsin          |
|--------------------|--------------|-------|-------|--------------------|--------------------|
|                    | 1990         | 2000  | 2010  | % Change 1990-2010 | % Change 1990-2010 |
| Labor Force        | 6,310        | 8,522 | 9,139 | 44.8%              | 22.1%              |
| Employed           | 5,640        | 7,859 | 8,354 | 48.1%              | 20.2%              |
| Unemployed         | 670          | 663   | 768   | 14.6%              | 56.4%              |
| Unemployment Rate  | 10.6%        | 7.8%  | 8.4%  | -20.8%             | 28.8%              |
| Participation Rate | 49.6%        | 56.0% | 50.9% | 2.6%               | 2.1%               |

Source: U.S. Census

**Display 5: Adams County Working Age Population Projections**



### **Workforce Participation**

Some of the growth in the county’s labor force has been due to the increase in the participation rates, and the remainder of the growth is likely due to increases in the working age population. In 1990, about 50 percent of the population over 16 was in the labor force. By 2000, that rate increased to 56 percent. However in 2010, there was a drop to 50.9 percent workforce participation. The national participation rate in 2010 was 65 percent, and the state rate was 69 percent. By comparison Adams County has fewer members of the working age population employed or seeking employment. These persons may not seek employment due to retirement, disability, choice to be a homemaker, or simply are not looking for work. In any event, these persons are not receiving unemployment benefits, nor are they seeking employment in any capacity.

### **Education & Training**

Worker productivity has often been cited as an important strength of Wisconsin’s economy. Both education and training is critical to maintaining that productivity.

The level of educational attainment is an important indicator of the skills of the labor force. Formal education and job training reflect a community’s ability to provide a labor force for certain types of industry.

Educational attainment in the county is very similar to the national average in terms of those with a high school diploma or better, and bachelor’s degrees or higher, although, the county does lag behind the state in both areas.

Training is another labor force indicator. Partnerships between local businesses, governments, and educational institutions are very useful in developing the Regional economy. Institutions such as UW-Stevens Point and Midstate Technical College often direct their programs to the training needs of local workers and businesses. Training services for dislocated workers are provided at the “Job Center” located in the City of Adams. The center is a one-stop resource for employers to meet their workforce needs and job seekers to get the career planning, job placement, and training services they need to obtain jobs. Organizations such as the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board are important to this process as well.

Shrinking workforce due to retiring baby boomers will cause labor shortages in the future. Attracting and retaining talent should be by now the most critical undertaking of businesses and communities over the foreseeable future. Technology can assist in reducing the demand for labor, but will require a more highly trained workforce.

## Incomes & Wages

There are two basic measures of income: median household income and per capita income. Median household income provides an indication of the economic ability of the typical household unit while per capita income provides a measure of relative earning power on a per person level. The Median Household income for Adams County in 2010 was \$39,885 and the Per Capita income was \$21,917. Both Median and Per Capita Incomes have declined over the last ten years when adjusted for inflation, by 5.7 percent and 2.6 percent respectively. Similar adjusted declines were seen in the state.

**Table 12** compares average annual wages by industry for the NAICS Supersectors for Adams County and the State. This highlights some disparities, such as a \$20,000 difference in average annual wages in the construction industry and professional and business services industry, and a \$30,000 difference in annual wages in the financial industry.

### Economic Development Infrastructure

Overall, Adams County's economic development infrastructure is concentrated in the central part of the county along Highway 13. This infrastructure investment provides a wider range of opportunities for the prospective entrepreneur and greatly increases the county's chances of developing and maintaining a

**Table 12 - Average Wage by Industry**

|                                  | Adams County | Wisconsin |
|----------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Natural Resources & Mining       | \$34,756     | \$30,613  |
| Construction                     | \$29,019     | \$49,135  |
| Manufacturing                    | \$46,117     | \$50,183  |
| Trade, Transportation, Utilities | \$30,626     | \$34,132  |
| Information                      | S*           | \$51,764  |
| Financial Activities             | \$22,329     | \$53,332  |
| Professional & Business Services | \$27,045     | \$46,516  |
| Education & Health Services      | \$30,704     | \$42,464  |
| Leisure & Hospitality            | \$14,452     | \$14,597  |
| Other Services                   | \$15,496     | \$22,682  |
| Public Administration            | \$42,340     | \$41,653  |
| Unclassified                     | S*           | \$46,846  |

Source: Dept of Workforce Development QCEW ES202

\*Data has been suppressed for confidentiality.

stable employment base for its workforce in the future.

Adams County's variety of infrastructure amenities includes:

- A fully serviced 75 acre industrial park located in the City of Adams, including rail service. Another 28 acre industrial park with full utility service, frontage directly on WI-13 and a rail connection is currently under development by the City.
- Three partly serviced industrial parks: one in the Town of Jackson (90 acres), one in the Town of Preston (5 acres), and one in the Town of Rome (75 acres).
- Three industrial type buildings available for immediate occupation totaling 172,300 square feet.
- 98 miles of state highway, including State Highways 13, 21, 23, 73, and 82.
- Approximately 234 miles of County maintained highways.
- A public-use airport with a 6,000' runway suitable for commercial and freight service. It is classified as a Basic Utility – B Airport.
- The Union Pacific Railroad with a terminal in the City of Adams.

Industrial Parks are a critical piece of economic development infrastructure in the county. The creation of industrial parks enables communities to compete with other communities to attract new businesses or to relocate existing businesses for expansions. An industrial park is a parcel of land that has been developed according to a plan that provides sites for potential industrial firms. The "park" is designed in such a way that it ensures compatibility among industrial operations and the existing activities of the area in which the park is located. The "park plan" provides for appropriate building setbacks, lot sizes, building to land ratios, architectural specifications, and landscaping required by the local codes and as necessitated by the nature of industrial activity. A business incubator is another tool that is currently being discussed at the county level to promote economic development.

### Major Employers

The largest employer in Adams County is Chula Vista, Inc. Next is the Adams-Friendship Public School System, followed by the Federal Prison and Rock Tenn Services, Inc, see **Table 13**.

**Table 13 - Major Employers, 2013**

| <b>Establishment</b>            | <b>Service or Product</b>                    | <b># of Employees</b> |
|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Chula Vista, Inc.               | Hotels and Motels                            | 500-999               |
| Adams-Friendship Public School  | Elementary and Secondary Schools             | 250-499               |
| Federal Prison System           | Correctional Institutions                    | 250-499               |
| Rock Tenn Services Inc.         | Corrugated and solid fiber box manufacturing | 100-249               |
| Moundview Memorial Hospital     | General medical and surgical hospitals       | 100-249               |
| Heartland Farms, Inc.           | Potato farming                               | 50-99                 |
| Spencer Super/A-F County Market | Supermarkets and other grocery stores        | 50-99                 |
| Villa Pines Living Center       | Nursing care facilities                      | 50-99                 |
| Mike & Tim Properties LLC       | Amusement and theme parks                    | 50-99                 |
| County of Adams                 | Police protection                            | 50-99                 |

Source: Dept of Workforce Development QCEW

### **Economic Development Programs**

There are a variety of county, regional, state and federal economic development programs available to businesses in the Town. These programs range from grants to loans, to general assistance.

#### **County**

- *Adams County Rural & Industrial Development Corporation (ACRIDC)*. ACRIDC is a non-profit organization that promotes the economic development of Adams County, Wisconsin, and its respective cities, villages, and towns. ACRIDC is comprised of area businesspersons, citizens, local government, utility company representatives, state agencies and elected officials, educational institutions and other organizations essential to the growth of Adams County. ACRIDC is prepared to serve the needs of new businesses coming to the area as well as to assist existing companies.
- *Adams County Revolving Loan Fund-CWED*. This Fund was created through the small city CDBG program. The grant enabled Adams County

to establish a revolving loan fund to assist local businesses in the county. Currently, the fund is administered by CWED.

- *Adams County Chamber of Commerce*. The Adams County Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to the development of the business community in Adams County. The Chamber offers information on local business and industry and also provides a variety of programs designed to assist business development.
- *Adams - Columbia Electric Coop (ACEC) Revolving Loan Fund*. The ACEC established a USDA - Rural Development IRP revolving loan fund designed to address a gap in private capital markets for long-term, fixed-rate, low down payment, low interest financing. It is targeted at the timber and wood products industry, tourism and other manufacturing and service industries.

#### **Regional**

- *North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation*. The North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC) manages a revolving loan fund designed to address a gap in private capital markets for long-term, fixed-rate, low down payment, low interest financing. It is targeted at the timber and wood products industry, tourism and other manufacturing and service industries.

#### **State**

- *Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)*. WEDC is the State's primary department for the delivery of integrated services to businesses. Their purpose is 1) to foster retention of and creation of new jobs and investment opportunities in Wisconsin and 2) to foster and promote economic business, export, and community development.
- *Wisconsin Small Cities Program*. The Wisconsin Department of Administration provides federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to eligible municipalities for approved housing and/or public facility improvements and for economic development projects. Economic Development grants provide loans to businesses for such things as: acquisition of real estate, buildings, or equipment; construction, expansion or remodeling; and working capital for inventory and direct labor.
- *Rural Economic Development Program*. This program administered by Wisconsin Department of Commerce provides grants and low interest

loans for small business (less than 25 employees) start-ups or expansions in rural areas, such as Adams County. Funds may be used for “soft costs” only, such as planning, engineering, and marketing assistance.

- *The Wisconsin Innovation Service Center (WISC)*. This non-profit organization is located at the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater and specializes in new product and invention assessments and market expansion opportunities for innovative manufacturers, technology businesses, and independent inventors.
- *Wisconsin Small Business Development Center (SBDC)*. The UW SBDC is partially funded by the Small Business Administration and provides a variety of programs and training seminars to assist in the creation of small business in Wisconsin.
- *Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA)*. This program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, provides immediate assistance and funding for the cost of transportation improvements necessary for major economic development projects.
- *Other State Programs*. Technology Development grants and loans; Customized Labor Training grants and loans; and Major Economic Development Project grants and loans.

## **Federal**

- *U.S. Dept. of Commerce - Economic Development Administration (EDA)*. EDA offers a public works grant program. These are administered through local units of government for the benefit of the local economy and, indirectly, private enterprise.
- *U.S. Department of Agriculture - Rural Development (USDA – RD)*. The USDA Rural Development program is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in all of rural America. Financial programs include support for such essential public facilities and services as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities, and electric and telephone service. USDA-RD promotes economic development by supporting loans to businesses through banks and community-managed lending pools. The program also offers technical assistance and information to help agricultural and other cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of their member services.

- *Small Business Administration (SBA)*. SBA provides business and industrial loan programs that will make or guarantee up to 90% of the principal and interest on loans to companies, individuals, or government entities for financing in rural areas. Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation acts as an agent for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) programs that provide financing for fixed asset loans and for working capital.

## **Economic Development Issues**

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### ***Business & Industrial Development***

Although Adams County has sites that are ready for industrial development, not all of these sites are capable of offering the wide range of services necessary to appeal to all types of industrial development. Effective industrial development requires facilities such as sewer, water, and telecommunications facilities as well as easy access to highways and rail. While Adams County offers many of these in its industrial parks, access to a major interstate highway is located outside the County. This makes enticing businesses to the industrial parks more difficult. Adams County also suffers from lack of diversification in its industrial economy leading to a heavy reliance on only a few industries. Such dependence means that local employment, as well as commercial retail trade, goes up and down with the business cycles for the dominant local industry.

### ***Recreation & Tourism***

The development of the recreation and tourism industry in Adams County has had a generally positive effect on the County, however, the County must be careful to moderate the growth of this industry with its capacity to serve it. Adams County's close proximity to the Wisconsin Dells recreational areas causes a great deal of development pressure. Many people are attracted to Adams County's recreational amenities because of its rural nature. Improper management of the recreation and tourism industry could lead to the outstripping of the attraction and a decline in the County's overall standard of living. The community must also take care to justify the expenditures of promotional funds spent to attract visitors during the year by tracking returns on investments. To do so will require a cooperative effort among the municipalities within Adams County to avoid inefficiencies and duplication of efforts.



### ***Income & Unemployment Levels***

Although the county has made progress toward closing the gap over the last twenty years, income levels still are below state and federal levels and the unemployment rate exceeds state and federal levels. These are both issues that have been identified and discussed at various levels throughout the county. Both need to be addressed to make the county a better place to live. Adams County remains well below the state average in both median household income and per capita income. Fortunately, trends indicate that the county is “closing the gap”. The persistence of poverty and unemployment in the city and the village pose a particular challenge especially as an employment center for the county.



Stuff's Family Restaurant

### **Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps**

Economic Development Goal: *Town of Dell Prairie has a diverse economy that is a place of opportunity where people and businesses can grow and be successful.*

1. Promote a diverse, healthy economic base.
  - a. Encourage new businesses, especially those that are compatible in a rural setting.
  - b. Develop and maintain a list of available sites and buildings for new businesses.
  - c. Encourage home-based businesses that do not significantly increase noise, traffic, odors, lighting, or would otherwise negatively impact the surrounding areas.
  - d. Pursue grant funding to clean-up possible contaminated commercial locations.
  - e. Review the costs and benefits of a proposed development project prior to approval.
  - f. Consider developing new ordinances that establish minimum aesthetic standards to eliminate commercial, industrial, and agricultural property with excessive debris, blighted property, and dilapidated buildings.
2. Encourage commercial and industrial development to locate adjacent to county or state highways.
  - a. Direct new commercial and industrial development to areas designated on the Future Land Use Map.
  - b. Promote new commercial and/or industrial development near the Plainville area (HWY 13 and Cty K).
  - c. Establish appropriate minimum/maximum lot sizes for commercial development, taking parking requirements into consideration.

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# LAND USE

The Town of Dell Prairie covers an area of almost 21,000 acres in southwestern Adams County. To the west, across the Wisconsin River in Juneau County are the Towns of Kildare and Lyndon. To the north are the Towns of Springville and Jackson. To the east is the Town of New Haven. To the south is the City of Wisconsin Dells and in Columbia County the Town of Newport.

## Previous Plans and Studies

### Regional Livability Plan

Land Use is one of four elements included in the Regional Livability Report, adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in 2015. The Land Use Assessment Report, a component of the Plan, looks in detail at the land uses through the 10-county region and identifies trends and issues facing land use. The Regional Livability Plan addresses two issues: housing density and farmland preservation. The two land use goals of the Plan are as follows:

- Goal 9: Preserve and protect the region's landscape, environmental resources, and sensitive lands while encouraging healthy communities.
- Goal 10: Manage and reduce vacant land and structures.

## Existing Land Use 2015

The Town of Dell Prairie covers an area of about 21,239 acres in Adams County. The area is characterized by thin till and pitted outwash. The typical terrain is flat with prominent outcroppings and covered with hardwoods or open for agricultural use with a general east to west drainage pattern. The natural resource



Residences along the River

base of the area is dominated by timber. Agricultural uses of the land are vitally important.

Knowledge of the existing land use patterns within a town is necessary to develop a desired “future” land use pattern. The Existing Land Use Map was developed using air photos from a countywide flight in 2015. Wooded properties cover about 62 percent of the area, followed by Agriculture with 21 percent and Residential with about 5 percent. See **Table 14** and **Map 6**, the Existing Land Use Map.

**Table 14 - Existing Land Use**

| Land Use Type      | Acres  | Percent |
|--------------------|--------|---------|
| Agriculture        | 4,517  | 21.6%   |
| Commercial         | 264    | 1.3%    |
| Governmental       | 13     | 0.06%   |
| Industrial         | 67     | 0.3%    |
| Open Land          | 528    | 2.5%    |
| Outdoor Recreation | 24     | 0.1%    |
| Residential        | 1,110  | 5.3%    |
| Transportation     | 737    | 3.5%    |
| Water              | 752    | 3.6%    |
| Woodlands          | 12,940 | 61.8%   |
| Total Acres        | 20,951 | 100%    |

Source: 2004 and 2015 air photo, NCWRPC

## Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map, **Map 7**, represents the long-term land use recommendations for all lands in the town. Although the map is advisory and does not have the authority of zoning, it is intended to reflect community desires and serve as a guide for local officials to coordinate and manage future development of the town.

The Plan groups land uses that are compatible and to separate conflicting uses. To create the Plan, nine basic future land use categories were created. The majority of the classifications generally correspond to the districts within the Adams County Zoning Ordinance, to ease future implementation of the plan. Again, the classifications are not zoning districts and do not have the authority of zoning. However, the preferred land use map and classifications are intended to be used as a guide when reviewing lot splits, re-zoning requests, and revisions to the town zoning map as necessary.

A general description of each classification follows:

1. **Residential.** Identifies areas recommended for residential development typically consisting of smaller lot sizes.
2. **Rural Residential.** Identifies areas that are recommended for less dense residential development, consisting of larger minimum lot sizes than the residential category. These areas will also allow a mixture of residential uses, and provide a good transition from more dense development to the rural countryside.
3. **Commercial.** Identifies areas recommended for commercial development, as well as existing commercial establishments located throughout the Town.
4. **Industrial.** Identifies areas recommended for industrial development, as well as existing industrial areas located throughout the Town.
5. **Governmental/Public/Institutional.** Identifies existing or planned governmental/public/institutional facilities within the Town, including recreational facilities.
6. **Agriculture.** Identifies areas to be preserved for the purpose of general crop farming or the raising of livestock.
7. **Woodlands.** Identifies areas of large woodlands within the Town.
8. **Preservation.** Contains sensitive environmental areas, such as 100-year floodplains as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, DNR wetlands, steep slopes of 12 percent or greater, and open water. This could include endangered species habitat or other significant features or areas identified by the Town.

The goal of the Future Land Use Map is to provide a generalized land use map to guide the town's growth in the next decade. The Future Land Use Map represents the desired arrangement of preferred land uses for the future, see Map 7. **Table 15** shows the acres and percent of total land under each category in the Future Land Use Map. Agricultural areas and woodland areas are the two largest categories, with 33.9% and 33.5% of total area respectively. Rural residential is the other substantial category with 22% of the total area.

### Land Use Conflicts

Any plan should seek to avoid or minimize potential future land use conflicts through controlled

**Table 15 - Future Land Use**

| Land Use Type     | Acres         | Percent       |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Agriculture       | 6,345         | 30.5%         |
| Commercial        | 746           | 3.6%          |
| Woodlands         | 6,507         | 31.3%         |
| Industrial        | 92            | 0.4%          |
| Residential       | 1,094         | 5.3%          |
| Rural Residential | 4,648         | 22.3%         |
| Transportation    | 680           | 3.3%          |
| Water             | 687           | 3.3%          |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>20,799</b> | <b>100.0%</b> |

Source: NCWRPC.

development, planned use-buffers, and public information and education components. In order to attain that outcome, it is important to identify the existing or potential conflicts between land uses in the Town. There may be some degree of undesirability between many land use combinations, such as a residential development in close proximity to a particular industrial or commercial development that might conflict with sight, sound, odor, or other undesirable characteristics. Another example could be a new residential neighborhood in proximity to a working farm, where farm equipment, odors, and sounds may not be compatible with dense residential development.

## Zoning

### County General Zoning

Nearly all of the counties in Wisconsin have established a general county zoning ordinance for lands outside of the shoreland jurisdiction. A town can join under this ordinance by resolution.

The Town of Dell Prairie is currently under Adams County zoning. Zoning is the major implementation tool to achieve the proposed land uses. Other implementation tools include such things as purchase of land or easements, subdivision ordinance, mobile/manufactured home restrictions, nuisance regulations, design review for commercial and industrial developments, infrastructure improvements (sewer and water, utilities), road construction and maintenance, and public services, among others.

To achieve the proposed land uses under the existing comprehensive County zoning authority, two basic options are available. Both options however would require County approval for implementation.



Agricultural uses

## County Shoreline Jurisdiction

All counties are mandated by Wisconsin law to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates land use in shoreland/wetland and floodplain areas for the entire area of the county outside of villages and cities. This ordinance supersedes any town ordinance, unless the town ordinance is more restrictive. The shoreland/wetland and floodplain area covered under this zoning is the area that lies within 1,000 feet of a lake and within 300 feet of a navigable stream or to the landward side of a floodplain whichever distance is greater.

## Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps

Land Use Goal: *Town of Dell Prairie makes sound land use decisions to balance the diverse needs of the community and to wisely maximize the land's potential.*

### **Option 1:**

*Utilize existing County zoning ordinance/districts.*

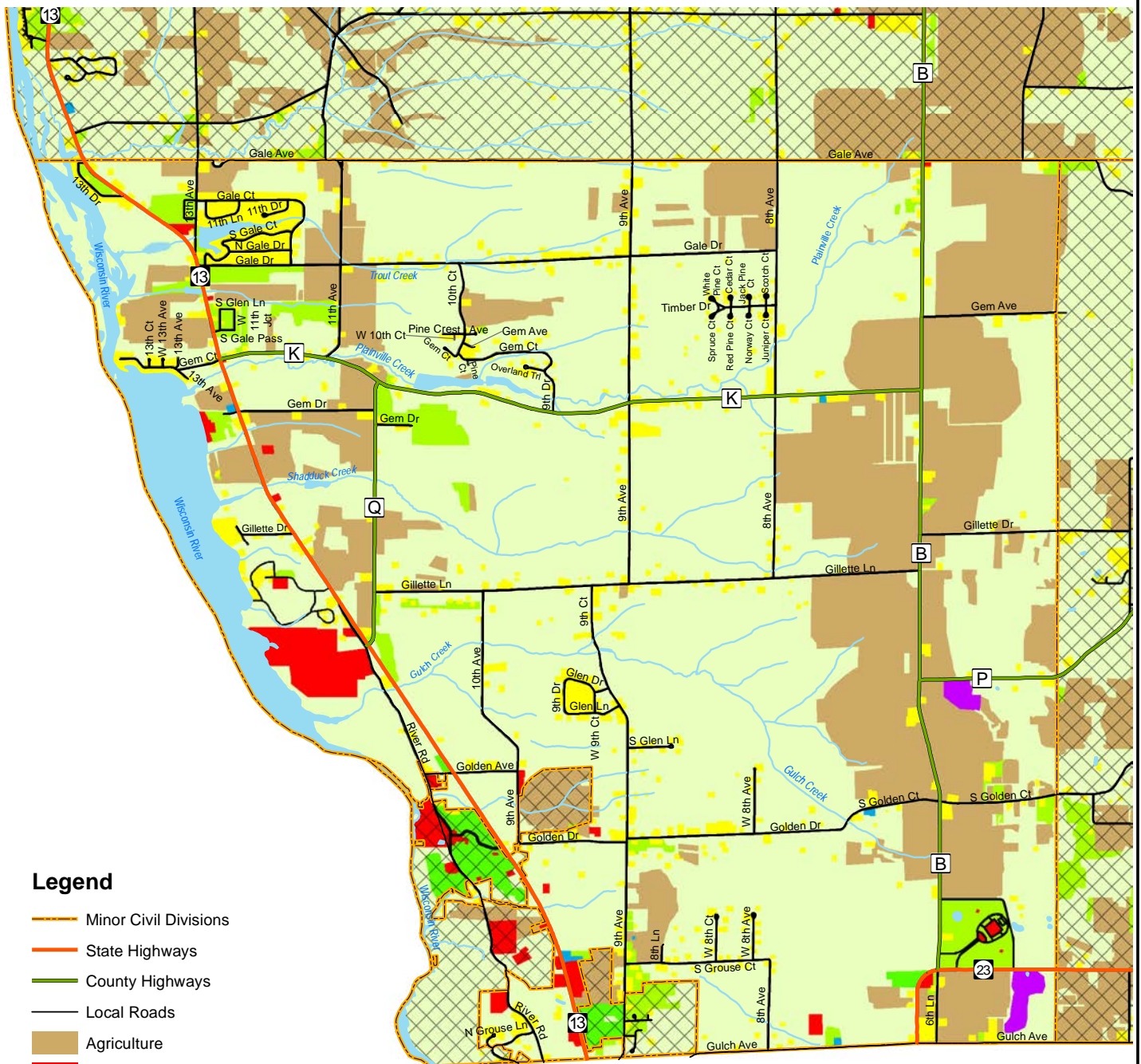
The Town could carefully review the existing district descriptions to determine which “best fit” or are most appropriate to each of the proposed land uses. The advantages of this option are that the existing zoning ordinance can be used. County Board approval of proposed zoning map amendments might be easier to achieve. The disadvantages of this option are that the existing zoning districts may not enable the Town to achieve the preferred future condition of the proposed land uses. For example, permitted uses in an existing district may not fit well with the proposed land uses, causing conflicting land uses.

### **Option 2:**

*Propose new zoning districts or modifications to existing district descriptions for the countywide ordinance.*

The Town would need to petition the County for zoning ordinance amendments that would be in effect for the entire county. The advantage of this would be that other towns may be in support of similar modifications and could provide political support for the changes. If approved, the Town would be able to create a better match between the zoning districts and proposed land uses. County staff would continue to administer zoning. The disadvantage would be that the changes would affect the entire county and may not be politically supported by other towns, the County Planning & Zoning Committee, Zoning staff, or the County Board. More zoning districts may make the existing County ordinance more complex and difficult to administer.

1. Promote efficient development patterns.
  - a. Promote new development consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.
  - b. Minimize scattered development and preserve rural character.
  - c. Promote the redevelopment of land with existing infrastructure.
  - d. Discourage new developments that would negatively impact the natural environment or existing property.
  - e. Minimize the loss and/or fragmentation of productive farmland and forest land.
  - f. Review expansion or new development of non-metallic mining operations to minimize conflict with preexisting development.
2. Provide tools for managing and coordinating growth and development.
  - a. Maintain the Comprehensive Plan to serve as a guide for future land use decisions.
  - b. Participate in zoning and subdivision review decisions at the County level that affect the Town.
  - c. Encourage conservation easements and other tools to protect environmentally sensitive or unique resources.
  - d. Work with the City of Wisconsin Dells to monitor boundary issues and to plan for the future.



**Legend**

- Minor Civil Divisions
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Governmental / Institutional / Utility
- Industrial
- Open Lands
- Outdoor Recreation
- Residential
- Transportation
- Water
- Woodlands



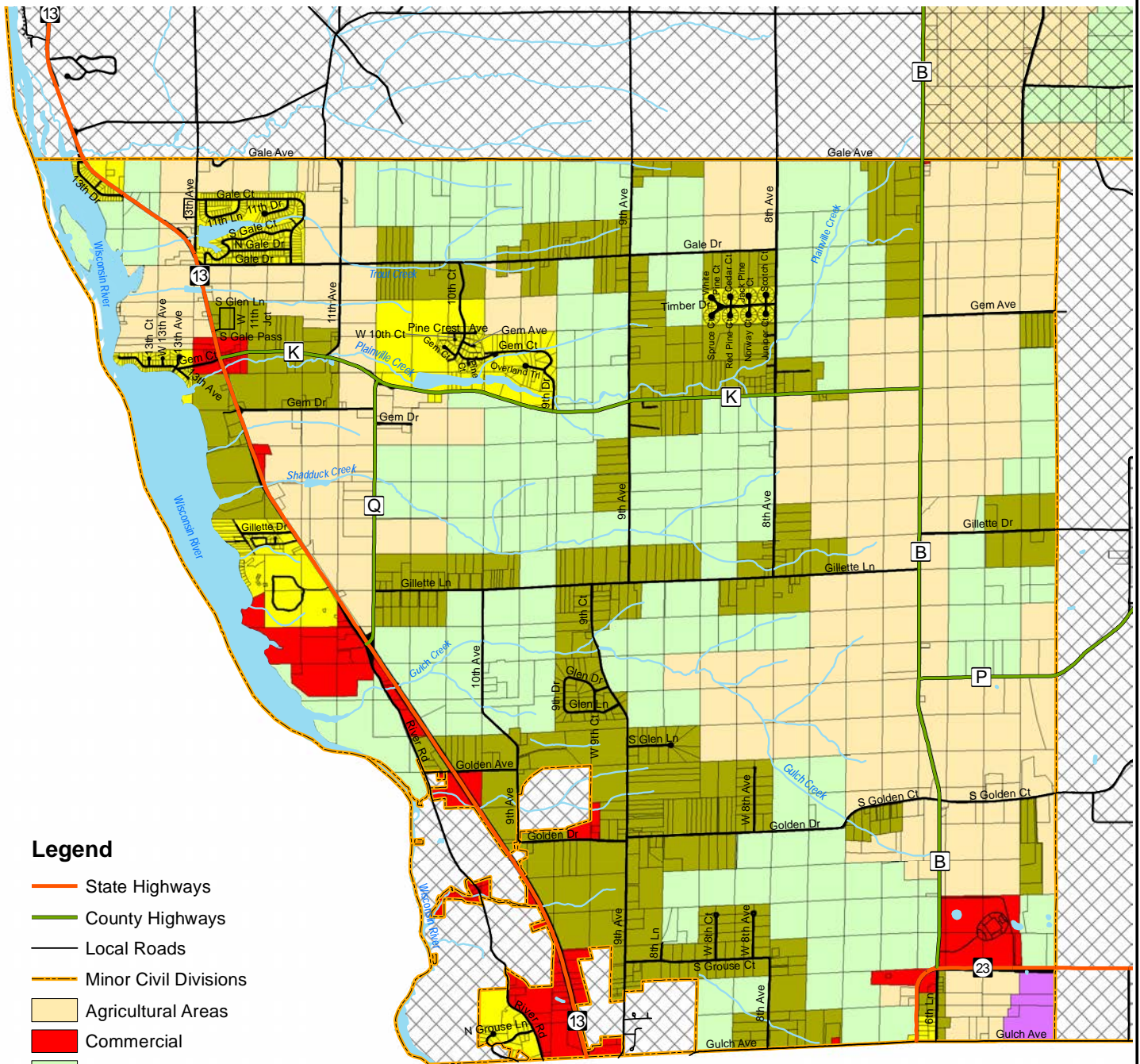
Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, 2015 Airphoto interpretation

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey of the actual boundary of any property depicted. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



**North Central  
 Wisconsin Regional  
 Planning Commission**

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**Legend**

- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Minor Civil Divisions
- Agricultural Areas
- Commercial
- Woodlands
- Governmental / Public / Institutional
- Industrial
- Multi-Family
- Preservation Areas
- Residential
- Rural Residential
- Transportation
- Water



Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC

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# INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

The issue of intergovernmental cooperation is increasingly important; since many issues cross over political boundaries, such as watersheds, labor force, commuter patterns, and housing. Communities are not independent of each other, but rather dependent on each other. The effects from growth and change on one spill over to all surrounding communities and impact the region as a whole.

Wisconsin Statute s.66.30, entitled “Intergovernmental Cooperation”, does enable local governments to jointly do together whatever one can do alone. Unfortunately, there is little public policy in Wisconsin law that encourages, let alone requires, horizontal governmental relationships such as town to town and municipality to county or town. The result is that towns, municipalities, and counties act more as adversaries than as partners.

State-wide, Wisconsin has over 2,500 units of government and special purpose districts. Having so many governmental units allows for local representation, but also adds more players to the decision making process. In general terms, intergovernmental cooperation is any arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve issues of mutual interest. It can be as simple as communication and information sharing, or it can involve entering into formal intergovernmental agreements and sharing resources such as equipment, buildings, staff, and revenue.

As jurisdictions communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, they become more aware of one another’s needs and priorities. They can better anticipate problems and work to avoid them. Intergovernmental cooperation makes sense for many reasons including trust, cost savings, consistency, and ability to address regional issues. Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and results that build trust between jurisdictions. It can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication. It can lead to consistency of goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions of neighboring communities. Finally, by communicating and coordinating their actions and working with regional and state jurisdictions, local communities are able to address and resolve issues that are regional in nature.

The major beneficiary of intergovernmental cooperation is the local resident. They may not understand, or even care about, the details of a particular intergovernmental issue, but residents can appreciate their benefits, such



A State Natural Area

as cost savings, provision of needed services, a healthy environment, and a strong economy.

A variety of factors, some long-standing and others more recent, have brought the issue of intergovernmental cooperation to the forefront. Some of these factors include:

- Local government’s financial situation;
- Opportunity to reduce costs by working together;
- Elimination of duplication of services;
- Population settlement patterns and population mobility; and
- Economic and environmental interdependence.

In addition, as more jurisdictions create and implement comprehensive plans and share them with surrounding communities, new opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation will be identified.

## Adjoining Units of Government

The entire Town is in the Wisconsin Dells School District, and fire/rescue/EMS/ambulance service is provided by the City of Wisconsin Dells via contract. Wisconsin Dells DNR Ranger Station handles forest/wild fire protection.

Cities, such as Wisconsin Dells, have authority to exercise “extraterritorial” zoning. The extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction consists of the unincorporated area within one and one-half miles of the corporate limits of a fourth class city like Wisconsin Dells.

Extraterritorial zoning is similar to other zoning in terms of purposes and type of districts. It differs in terms of the process by which a zoning ordinance is adopted. When a city decides to zone its extraterritorial area, a joint extraterritorial zoning committee must be established. It consists of three citizen members of the city planning commission and three members from each of the affected towns. This joint committee prepares a proposed plan and regulations for the extraterritorial area and submits it to the city. The city may adopt it as proposed or resubmit the proposal to the joint committee for changes. In either case, the proposed regulations must receive a favorable majority vote from the joint committee before the city can adopt them. The City also has land division/parceling or subdivision plat approval authority within the mile and a half extraterritorial area.

### **Conflict Resolution Between Governments**

Occasionally, issues occur between Dell Prairie and Adams County in local zoning and land use matters. Dell Prairie will work to minimize these issues by undertaking a more comprehensive review of land use proposals, providing better communication to Adams County and making a stronger case for its local land use recommendations.

Dell Prairie will cooperate with all levels of government on issues of mutual concern, including resource protection, transportation, land use, education, and human services. Cost sharing or contracting with neighboring towns or the county will continue to provide services or public utilities efficiently.

There are no other existing or potential conflicts with other governmental units known at this time.

## **Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps**

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Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal: *Town of Dell Prairie is a cooperative and collaborative partner with other units of government and organizations to most effectively and efficiently provide services to residents.*

1. Establish and maintain good working relationships with other units of government, including adjoining towns, Adams County, the State of Wisconsin, and the federal government.
  - a. Promote communication between the Town and other governmental entities.
  - b. Review and discuss extra-territorial issues with the City of Wisconsin Dells as they arise.
  - c. Periodically review existing shared service agreements and explore additional agreements which would benefit the Town.
  - d. Pursue cooperative agreements regarding boundary agreements, annexation, expansion of public sewer and water services, and growth management between the City and the Town.
  - e. Consider the feasibility of establishing local zoning in conjunction with other neighboring towns and sharing administrative staff.

# IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of this plan depends of the willingness of local officials, at both the Town and County levels, to use it as a guide when making decisions that affect the growth and development of the Town. It is also important that local citizens and developers become aware of the plan.

This Plan, having been prepared as a single unit, is consistent in its parts and there is no inconsistency between them.

The Implementation chapter includes the tools and techniques recommended to implement the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations.

## **Town Decision Making**

The Town Board should adopt the plan and use it as a guide in decisions that affect development in the Town. The Town Plan Commission should become very knowledgeable of the plan and use it when making recommendations to the Town Board on development issues.

## **Adoption of Ordinances**

The Town should develop and adopt a Town street ordinance concerning minimum acceptable road construction standards as well as sidewalks and public roadway buffer strip. The Town should also incorporate the changes to its Zoning Ordinance contained in this Plan

## **Citizen Participation/Education**

The Town should encourage citizen awareness of the Town's comprehensive plan by making copies available and conducting public informational meetings.

## **Tools for Implementation**

### ***Zoning***

The Town of Dell Prairie is currently under Adams County zoning. Zoning is the major implementation tool to achieve proposed land uses by regulating the use of all structures, lands, and waters in the Town. Zoning districts provide primarily regulations for land use within the district by use type and the zoning map provides the locations of the districts. See the Zoning Ordinance for more information.

### ***Land Division***

The Adams County Land Division Ordinance outlines procedures for land division, technical requirements, design standards for plats and certified maps, and outlines required improvements. The county ordinance

also includes provisions for cluster developments, but provides little guidance for such development design and objectives. Local units of government may elect to have a separate land division ordinance if it is more restrictive than the county ordinance.

### ***Other Tools***

Additional tools and approaches can be utilized by the Town to achieve the goals of the plan. These include but are certainly not limited to the following: fee simple land acquisition, easements (purchased or volunteered), deed restrictions, land dedication, and ordinances or programs regulating activities such as impact fees, land division, building permits, erosion control, etc.

## **Plan Amendments**

Periodic amendments can be made to this Plan. Amendments are generally defined as minor changes, such as slight changes to the text or maps. Frequent changes to accommodate specific development proposals should be avoided. The Comprehensive Planning Law requires that the same process used to adopt the Plan be used to amend the Plan.

## **Plan Review and Update**

Periodic updating of the plan is necessary for continued refinement and course correction to insure that it reflects the desires of the Town's citizens. An essential characteristic of any planning process is that it be ongoing and flexible. The Town should re-examine the plan, at least every five years, and determine if more complete review is required to bring it into line with changed conditions or altered priorities within the Town.

State law requires that a Comprehensive Plan be updated every ten years.

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# APPENDIX A: PLAN ADOPTION ORDINANCE

## STATE OF WISCONSIN

### Town of Dell Prairie

### Adams County

## ORDINANCE 03-2016 DELL PRAIRIE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### SECTION I – TITLE AND PURPOSE

The title of this ordinance is the Town of Dell Prairie Comprehensive Plan Ordinance. The purpose of this ordinance is for the Town of Dell Prairie, Adams County, Wisconsin, to lawfully adopt a comprehensive plan as required under s. 66.1001 (4) (c), Wis. stats.

### SECTION II – AUTHORITY

The Town Board of the Town of Dell Prairie, Adams County, Wisconsin, has authority under its village powers under s. 60.22, Wis. stats., to appoint a town plan commission under ss. 60.62 (4) and 62.23 (1), Wis. stats., and under s. 66.1001 (4), Wis. stats., to adopt this ordinance. The comprehensive plan of the Town of Dell Prairie must be in compliance with s. 66.1001 (4) (c), Wis. stats., in order for the town board to adopt this ordinance.

### SECTION III – ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE

This ordinance, adopted by a majority of the town board on a roll call vote with a quorum present and voting and proper notice having been given, provides for the adoption by the town of a comprehensive plan under s. 66.1001 (4), Wis. stats.

### SECTION IV – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The town board has adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by s. 66.1001 (4) (a), Wis. stats.

### SECTION V – TOWN PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Plan Commission of the Town of Dell Prairie, by a majority vote of the entire commission, recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the town board the adoption of the Town of Dell Prairie Comprehensive Plan, which contains all of the elements specified in s. 66.1001 (2), Wis. stats.

### SECTION VI – PUBLIC HEARING

The Town of Dell Prairie has held at least one public hearing on this ordinance, with notice in compliance with the requirements of s. 66.1001 (4) (d), Wis. stats.

### SECTION VII – ADOPTION OF TOWN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The town board, by the enactment of this ordinance, formally adopts the document entitled Town of Dell Prairie Comprehensive Plan Ordinance under s. 66.1001 (4) (c), Wis. stats.

### SECTION VIII – SEVERABILITY

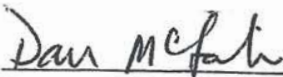
If any provision of this ordinance or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of this ordinance that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this ordinance are severable.

### SECTION IX – EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance is effective on publication or posting.

The town clerk shall properly post or publish this ordinance as required under s. 60.80, Wis. stats. and a copy of the ordinance and the comprehensive plan, shall be filed with at least all of the entities specified under s. 66.1001 (4) (b), Wis. stats..

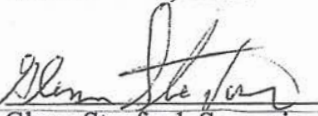
Adopted this 15th day of November, 2016



Dan McFarlin, Chair



Rocky Gilner, Supervisor I



Glenn Stanford, Supervisor II

Attested by:



Joni Gehrke, Clerk

**Town of Dell Prairie  
Comprehensive Plan  
2016**